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WHEN WINTER STORMS.

BY M. H.

I fear not Winter's sullen skies
If my true love be near to me.
Beneath the love-light in her eyes,
I fear not Winter's sullen skies;
My buoyant heart all gloom defies,
Though shadows rest on lawn and lea.
I fear not Winter's sullen skies
If my true love be near to me.

I miss no tuneful warbler's song
If my love's voice is in mine ear.
Such sweet notes to her voice belong,
I miss no tuneful warbler's song
When wintry storms blow loud and long,
And nestless woods are lone and drear.
I miss no tuneful warbler's song
If my love's voice is in mine ear.

In my love's cheek the red rose blows
When Summer blooms no more are here.
When whirling fall the wintry snows,
In my love's cheek the red rose blows;
And in her heart love for me glows
Unchanged by the changeful year.
In my love's cheek the red rose blows
When Summer blooms no more are here.

DOWN THE ABYSS.

BY F. M. P.

Of the fell-side mists drifted slowly before the wind, which freshened as the light grew stronger. They broke and closed again, like an army of phantoms, as silent and as fugitive, at first keeping the same level of possession, until, forced upwards by the wind, and dispersed by the flush of coming day, they began to roll fitfully along the course of the mountain becks; or, driven towards the higher hills, clung there persistently, veiling the uppermost peaks with their pale vapors.

As the light increased, colors flashed out from what but a minute before had been a dim grey waste; forms leapt into outline, hill beyond hill unfolded pearly distances. Had anyone been there to watch this gradual yet irresistible disclosure, this tender stealing forth of the known from mysterious depths, this familiar yet strange requickening of Nature, he could hardly have watched without a thrill. Apparently there was no one.

Fell swept into fell, the blue hills stretched far, but no living creature was in sight except a few scattered sheep, dotted whitely here and there upon what looked like inaccessible heights.

Life was there, however, ready to answer the call of the young day. First the glad cry of some bird, and the finer chirp of the grasshoppers; then an immediate articulate stir, the rustle of tiny insects in the short turf, small, sawlike, penetrating sounds which could hardly be defined, but which added irrepressibly to the sense of awakening movement. Moreover, after these had been set in motion, they all as suddenly ceased, leaving an instantaneous impression of listening silence, quite different from the heavier stillness of the night, but full of expectation. While this lasted the mists rolled a little lower down the mountain.

At once, more rapidly, the light brightened, and through the long level line of grey cloud which barred the east, broke the glory of the sun, flinging up his golden shafts towards the heavens like a phalanx of spears triumphantly shaken.

And instantly on this fell-side world, the twitter and rustle broke out again to greet him; the shadows of the slopes grew purple, the white vapors chased each other to the heights once more. The indescribable freshness—the bright green of the grass from which the mist had but now lifted, leaving it wet and sparkling—the joy of the mountain stream, which raced down beside the path in a deep, cool, mossy cleft, so narrow that the grasses closed above it, and kept the little water-flowers in a sweet prison—all this joined to the wholesome fragrance of the air and its buoyant exhilaration, seemed the very embodiment of young and delightful life.

Still no one came to share it. It was autumn, and while at this particular point no trees broke the somewhat austere sweep of the fells, lower down, when a projecting shoulder had been passed, foliage was seen, touched with the first gold of September. Here, too, cultivation opened out, and fields were visible where pallid yellows showed that the barley had been but lately carried.

And now at last one man came into sight.

He stood on the top of one of the lower fells, his motionless figure for a while clearly defined against the sky, but presently turning, he began to descend, until in a short space of time, by active running and leaping, he had reached the shoulder of the hill already mentioned. There he paused, looking back at the higher world he had left, as though loth to leave it, and finally changing his energetic movements for a leisurely amble, he slowly, but himself on making his way to the foot, kept to the left along the slope of the same hill.

Seen more closely, he appeared to be a young man, strongly built, not tall, but giving promise of wiry activity. He had pleasant grey eyes, which looked twinkling out at the world, and a fair complexion, burnt to a depth of red which could not be called becoming. Taken all in all he offered an impression of light-heartedness and vigor in keeping with the blithe freshness of early morning on the hill-side.

He walked slowly, often stopping to look about him to listen to the larks, or from sheer idleness to shy a stone at one of the numberless rabbits darting about among the bracken and bilberries, already beginning to turn the brilliant red which later makes the glory of these Cumberland fells.

He had a quick eye which nothing escaped, and as soon as he had passed a broken piece of ground something came into sight which brought him up with an audible "Hallo!"

At the foot of the hill, which was less high and less abrupt, spread a wide expanse of pasture land stretching far north. Through the flat plain a road, winding white, might be traced for a considerable distance.

This road, ascending, ran along below the hill, and what caused Dick Carmichael's exclamation was either the sight of an enclosure roped off from the road, or the discovery that he was no longer alone on the fell.

A man, evidently a shepherd was in front of him. That a shepherd should be out at any hour of the night or day was in no way remarkable, and Dick had expected to come upon one long before. There was, however, something strange, or so it struck the young man, about his movements.

He was running swiftly along the hill-side, leaping over obstacles, and at times wildly waving a stick which he carried, presently turning down the hill and following the direction of two or three short poles planted in the grass and bracken, which Dick could now clearly distinguish.

He made out further, as the shepherd emerged from a low thickness of gorse, that he was accompanied by a dog. Reaching a small pen of hurdles, the two paused, the shepherd by his gestures apparently pointing something out to the dog; after this he started again, running as before, and the young man, a good deal puzzled, dropped on the grass behind a grey upstarting limestone rock so much the color of his clothes as effectually to hide him from view, though the shepherd retracing the course he had before taken, and running very fast, at one time came within a stone's throw of him.

Suddenly he stopped, and Dick, casting a look around to see the cause, was aware of a light cloud of dust upon the road which stretched through the pasture. The cloud propably arose from a flock of sheep advancing towards the fell, but it appeared too distant to have startled the shepherd. The nex moment, however, another cloud came into sight, much nearer, and approaching from the opposite direction.

This flock had been hidden from sight by the unevenness of the ground, but it was probable that the keener ears of the shepherd had distinguished the faint pattering of the feet while it was still inaudible to the other watcher, and that this had given the alarm, if alarm there was. He now turned, and was walking with long strides towards Dick.

Dick, who by this time fancied he had got hold of the key of the problem, reassumed sitting on the grey stone, knee deep in the bracken and the bilberries, and pulling out a pipe began to light it. The dog, a black and tan collie, slipping along behind her master, noticed him; lifting her head and cocking her ears doubtfully, but the shepherd had his eyes fixed on the ground, and was within thirty feet of Carmichael before he caught sight of him. He started visibly and hesitated, but finally came on.

The man was a powerfully built young fellow of perhaps five and twenty years of age, though his face had early lost the look of youth. He was dark-eyed, with heavy scowling eyebrows, from under which his eyes cast side-glances, uninterested yet keen, like those of an untamed animal.

His skin was swarthy enough to justify those who vowed he had gipsy blood in his veins. He had, however, accepted without demur the name by which he was generally known—Black Bat. He held his head arrogantly, and would have passed Carmichael without a direct look, if Dick, removing his pipe, and leaning back with his elbows on the stone behind him, had not put a question.

"Are the sheep-dog trials coming off to-day?"

The shepherd gave him a swift side-glance in which there lurked an angry disgust, and answered laconically, without pausing on his way, "Seems sa."

Always followed by his dog, holding herself so closely at his heels that she looked the very shadow of her master, his long springy strides soon carried him behind a point of rock which hid him from view. Dick, his efforts at sociability thus baffled, stared after him with a laugh.

"Well, what a cantankerous face the fellow has! Worth something, though, if one could get hold of it."

With that he rose, stretched himself, and whistling, strolled slowly along the side of the hill, watching the efforts of shepherds and dogs to drive their flocks into the reserve pens.

The place had leapt into activity, tents were being set up, and flags placed on the poles among the fern, but still higher up on the fells, the solemn solitudes were uninvaded, the mists still curled defiantly about the peak, and Dick stood watching their weak strength, until a craving for food warned him that if he meant to see the sheep-dog trials he should go back to his little inn and to breakfast.

* * * * * * *

The air had grown heavier and the mists dropped lower on the fells. Fine gradation of color touched the nearer fells, and in the distance a large mountain stood boldly detached, free from the hovering vapors, and darkly grey. As Carmichael once more rounded the hill-shoulder, he paused with a momentary disgust that the brooding silence of the fells should be so rudely broken in upon.

The crowd, minute and many-colored as it looked, dotted about among the fern, produced an effect of incongruity; up from below rose a confused babble of voices, a gleam of sunshine sharply touched the white folds of the tent; the yelp of an intruding dog struck a higher note among the other sounds. Halt reluctantly Carmichael began to make his way downwards.

There was a stir in the crowd for the trials were just beginning, and as newcomers constantly arrived on the spot, they pressed eagerly forward, crushing out the fresh green smell of the fern. Dick looked carelessly about him and finally made his way to the side of a broad bluff farmer, who was leaning against one of the stakes which supported the ropes.

By this time the serene loveliness of the early morning had fled, though a fitful beauty remained, which seemed yet more in harmony with the character of the fell.

Not a lark was to be heard, but the strident cry of a curlew occasionally pierced the hum of voices. The sky was pale with a broken breadth of thin cloud, here and there the greyness concentrated into menace, and one or two of the more distant hills had a blur upon them which looked like rain, while an occasional shaft of sunlight, breaking through the veiling mist, lit the tawny green of the fell-side, or sent some quick shadow to flit across it.

Many of the farmers had come on horseback, and a little biting and kicking went on at the hurdles where the horses were hitched, secretly incited and encouraged by the two boys who had been put in charge.

Groups of shepherds lounged about, their dogs the chief subject of conversation; the men had a grave absorbed air as they discussed the judges and the different merits of the competitors; the dogs, on their part, except where some less experienced puppy made frisking advances, kept their attention fixed on their masters, as if fully aware that presently there would be serious work on hand.

Other spectators there were, friends and neighbors, among them a fair sprinkling of women, but these generally congregated together, contenting themselves with sending out a light buzz of comment. Every now and then one of the younger shepherds, his collie at his heels, would detach himself from his grave companions and march boldly towards one of these feminine groups, from which he would emerge with a less assured air of dignity, and sometimes a noticeable loss of self-possession.

Two women there were, however, who kept themselves apart from the others and showed no interest in anything but the direct business of the meeting. Both were poorly dressed, but there was a singular intensity of expression in the girl's pale face which commanded attention as surely as beauty of feature, and more than one young man, as he passed, turned and looked at her again.

Plainly, however, his admiration was unnoticed, or uncared for, she kept her

only removing them at intervals to speak hurriedly to the old woman at her side.

At last she turned away with an impatient sigh.

"Ah wad rayther it was over an' done wid t'!"

The old woman glanced round, and said, sourly—

"Thoo'll nivver knaw thy awn mind, silly! Minute ago thoo wad seuner Lass went in t' last."

"Ah knaw. Ah dinna knaw wat Ah want."

"Shaf!" returned the old woman. "Noo, Ah'll larn thee. T' lasses are aw meade after yan pattern ov fulishness, joost as yan cabbidge favors anudder cabbidge. Dis ta think theer's nowt in ta world bit thy marryin' wid Bat? .f thoo were na a fule, Jenny, thoo'd gie 't oop. Bat—Bat's a fine strong felish, oalas was," she continued, pride in her son struggling with the experiences of life, "bit no t' chap ta wed wid. Thoo'll na hev a tat time on 't wid Bat."

"Bat hev oalas bin gude to mob," said the girl, simply. "Look, look, thar's a dog rinnin'!"

While the women had been speaking, a red flag signalled from the judges' station, and there was a stir in the distant pen where the reserve sheep were herded. Presently, two or three sheep were seen rushing up the fell, as wild as deer, and bent upon making the most of their liberty.

In a small pen, near the judges, stood a shepherd and his dog, the broken ground completely hid the sheep from the dog, but on the shepherd making a sign in the right direction, she dashed away, though running with caution, and constantly turning her head to receive her master's signalled orders. A sort of interested stir communicated itself to the men.

"Yon's Flora's!" said more than one, as if Flora were a dreaded rival.

"Ah thought t' ould dog wadna rin," remarked a small weasel-faced man, in a disappointed tone. "Fred meade oot as Rab wad be shy o' reeakin' her, noo that she's a year oalder."

"Fred's yan as oalas thinks t' world's pium set on meakin' his sin fortune," said the first speaker, decisively. "Yo can gar him believe onnythin' as fits wid wat he wants."

Meanwhile the dog was well at her work. The shepherd might not leave his place, or guide her except by voice, whistle, or hand, and the sheep she had to find and bring in were quite half a mile away, while she had but ten minutes allowed in which to carry out her task.

Catching sight of the truants at last, she bounded swiftly through the bracken, and brought them rather too hurriedly back, for, although they passed the right side of the flags, they came wildly up to the pen, and, at sight of it, scattered again.

Recognising her mistake, Flora changed her tactics, and, crouching on all fours, stalked them like an Indian, and crept round to their rear, gently driving them to the little opening, not three feet wide, through which they had to pass.

Here she had her master's help, but he was not allowed to touch the sheep, and had it not been for the dog's marvelous patience and sagacity the wild creatures would never have been penned.

The bystanders watched breathlessly, till suddenly up towards the silent slope of the fells there rolls a hoarse shout, and Flora dropped, satisfied, at her master's heels. Dick found himself cheering with the rest, and the red-faced, assertive-looking farmer by his side returned his fat watch with a sidelong effort to its place.

"Gude wark, gude wark, indeed," he pronounced. "She's no that bonny, but oliver, and rins like a deer. Hec! nowt bit buttermilk t' day, Ah'll warrant. Rab Wilson knaws his bisness."

"How long?" demanded Dick.

"Six meenits an' a haff, and Ah'll lay a wager theer's no shorter time t' day—widout," he added, struck by a sudden misgiving. "Widout, mebbe, it's Black Bat an' that Lass ov his. Ah 'm no preepared ta speak as sure o' they twa."

"Which is Black Bat?"

"Stanain' theer by hisself, wid t' black an' tan collie. Bit ye needna ask, yance ye hev looked in his feace. *Lass* is as oliver as if Ould Nick hed t' teachin' ov her, as mebbe he hev," he added in a lower tone. Then, as Flora's deeds again rose uppermost in his mind, "Bit Ah doot her ootrinnin' t' tudder' this mornin'. Howivver, we'll see."

In the man pointed out, Dick Carmichael, as he expected, recognised the shepherd he had met at an earlier hour upon the fell. For some unexplained reason it appeared as if a secret antagonism had sprung up between the two men, an antagonism which was not easily raised in Dick's kindly nature, and which interested him from its novelty.

He now looked straight at Black Bat, who stood aloof, leaning against a spare hurdle or two which had been thrust into the ground, the unconscious ease of the attitude throwing out the strong supple lines of his tall figure, and his dark face darker from the shadow of his hat.

In spite of this shadow Dick could feel that his eyes, fiery and imperious, were fastened upon him, and the young man turned impatiently away, resenting the dominant magnetism of the look. The old farmer was remarking, contemptuously—

"Noo theear's isal Fred Langley an' his Moll, t' fullishest dog in t' countryside! Wat gars t' mon ta be seech a fule as to pit her oop? Yoo'll hev a fine piece o' boggin' noo! Theer go t' sheep, joost as Ah guessed, Fred wavin' an' screechin', an' Moll nivver mindin' her business, nivver thinkin' o' gaun efter them at aw! Gie 't oop ta yance, Fred, gie 't oop! Yo were a fule to enter—ay, theer's t' joodges whisperin', an' ould Foster dangin' his fist doon, an' t' signal to os ta silly creature aff. Weel, Fred oalas was a fule."

Hutchings, well content with this stiffening of his righteous opinions, now set himself to watch the next trial. A light wind had sprung up, which seemed to rouse itself at intervals to sweep down the fells, and then died away in a half-hearted, hesitating fashion.

The cloud brooded lower, a few yellow and lilac patches in the ferns became brightly prominent in the midst of the duller coloring.

The distant ranges took deep blue shadows, but their tops were mostly hidden from view; they stood gravely silent, impressing their silence upon those who looked at them, in spite of the clamor which sometimes broke out from the sheep-pens, and the shrill anxious whistles with which the shepherds directed their dogs.

Considerable excitement was raised by the trial which succeeded that of the unlucky Moll, for the dog, a famous prize-winner, missed the first flag, and although this would not absolutely disqualify her if the rest of her task were well done, her master was not content, and when it was realised that, although too far off for voice to reach her, he was signalling to her to go back, there was a subdued murmur among the spectators, and an involuntary pressure towards the judges.

Two girls standing near Carmichael were amongst those thus forced nearer, and an elderly gentleman with them shook his head authoritatively.

"Will is asking too much, really asking too much," he said, with the experience of one who was himself lenient in his expectations. "That is the collie you admired so particularly, Nan."

There was a hushed silence for a few minutes, broken by a sudden cheer. "Upon my word she's done it, after all! I couldn't have believed it."

Dick was conscious of enthusiastic remarks at his back, then a demand—

"Uncle Ralph, can you? What are they doing now? Ah, here is Sir Walter! Sir Walter, do tell us what is going on?"

"Why, a fool of a dog has got fogged and lost her sheep outright. That must be about the last of this lot, and the puppies will be coming on." He consulted a paper.

"No, I see there's one more entry. Hallo, Carmichael, who on earth would have expected you to turn up here? On the look-out for a subject? Kennedy, you should know my friend Carmichael—the artist."—in an aside.

"Mr. Carmichael—the Miss Kennedys. Miss Kennedy will be able to give you any information about this sort of thing, if you care for it."

Dick bowed abstractedly. Five minutes before he might have welcomed a talk; but now his attention fastened itself with half reluctant yet emphatic interest upon Black Bat.

The young shepherd had remained in his disdainful solitude till this moment, when, flinging back his head with the arrogant movement Dick had already noticed, he strode to the pen, closely followed by the heedful Lass. The flagging interest of the bystanders was at once revived.

The men, whose dogs had so far been successful, gathered into a group, keenly watching every movement; the dogs, to judge by their pricked ears and intelligent faces, watching too. Hutchings, by one of his convulsive jerks, once more extracted his watch from its deep recess.

"Noo thoo'lt see a varra pretty bit o' wark," he nodded over his shoulder to Dick. "Mon an' dog baith knaw what they're aboot, an' Black Bat will na worry an' over-signal her like yon bietherin' Tam Rigg. Yon mist's ta danger, bit mebbe t' wind 'll carry it awa. Though Ah'm nut seen as she'll oot-do Floora," he added, mindful of the credit of his former prophecies. "Ah'm nut joost lookin' for't. It's a case o' mebbe."

The shepherd had now shaken off his indifference, and glanced quickly and uneasily at the gathering clouds which were sweeping towards the head of the fell. He spoke in an undertone to the collie, apparently giving her directions, to which she listened with head slightly on one side, ears cocked, and intelligent eyes closely scanning her master's face.

Some difficulty was experienced in getting the sheep out of the reserve pen, and the delay was sufficient to thicken the fall of cloud. It hung and hesitated, blotting out all behind, but leaving the crest of the hill still open to view.

For one reason or another a breathless interest held the spectators, and the girl Jenny, whom all this time Black Bat had not approached, stood gazing intently, her hands clasped over her heart, her slight form swaying with excitement.

The instant the sheep were got out they made frantically for the top of the fell, and it was evident that they were the most unruly three of the day.

"They'll need mair handlin' than enny dog can gie, happed in sooch mists an' as high oop," said the weasel-faced shepherd, a man with pointed thin face and cropped red hair, in a tone of satisfaction, as Bat blew a warning whistle between two fingers. "Doon, Guilty, doon, ye fule! Nivver tell meh she hev a chance!"

"Weel, yooar Guilty will na stand in her way, Tam Rigg," returned another, with outspoken, if unpleasant, frankness. He stooped, with his hands on his knees, watching with genuine admiration. "Ah! Ah dunno as she's dune for yit, for aw they'rê as bee oop. She's a clivver beastie! Dis ta see hoo she stalks them?"

"Ay, ay! clivver snoo!" assented a third dalesman briefly. "She's workin' grsn'ly; bit ta mist 'll beat her, or Bat 'll lose patience."

He dropped his voice cautiously as he made this assertion, emphasizing it with a nod.

"Hoo her noo!" cried a boy eagerly.

Dog and sheep were indeed for some moments visible at the top of the fell, looming larger than life against a background of pale mist which hung like a shroud; and, as it was perceived how admirably she had the unruly three in hand, a murmur of admiration broke from the crowd.

But even before this had time to die away, the blinding fog swooped down and completely hid the animals in its dark folds. Hutchings, to whom Carmichael had lent his field-glasses, dropped them with an exclamation.

"Bad luke!—bad luke, indeed! Whativver can you do widout sight or signals oop in t' fog? Ah'm sorry for her, Ah'm!"

"The fog may lift," suggested Dick; "but I suppose too much time would have been lost."

"Oh, as ta that, t' joodges wad tek t' rain into consoederation, as ta puir beast was workin' as finely, an' wad stretch ta time. 'Tiana so mooch that as that she can nivver keep you wild demons awtagidder in soosh a fog; they'll be ower t' fell an' awa'."

To the onlookers it appeared that this must be the case. There was a dead breathless silence, in which the sweep of a sudden wind through the dry fern was audible; the phantom mists chased each other in ghostly fashion about the tops of the fells.

The stray dog which had been thrusting awkward advances upon its fellows all day, retreated with a yelp from an impatient kick. The man's eyes, finding a blank elsewhere, fastened themselves upon Bat, who stood gazing gloomily at the curtain which clung to the hill and blotted its summit from view; while the less interested spectators, feeling that the trial was virtually at an end, and fearing that the rain would soon descend to the lower ground, began by twos and threes to move towards shelter.

Suddenly a restraining murmur ran through the crowd.

Out of the cloudland came the three sheep, kept well together by Lass, in spite of wild efforts to break away; their wet wool gleaming whitely against the grey, while the dog was only visible as a dark speck. In an instant Bat had shaken off his gloom and leapt into active direction.

Lass, with marvelous skill, guided her timorous charges past the flags and down trough the trampled bracken towards the pen; but there it became evident that the sheep were unusually stubborn.

Again and again she brought them to the opening, so narrow as only to admit one animal to pass at a time, and again and again they perversely started aside at the very moment of success; rushing now in this direction, now in that. Lass never made a fault; her patience was almost pathetic in its self control. But, as the minutes passed, Bat was not so immovable, and the dalesmen nudged each other as he gave increasing signs of anger. A thin rain was now falling, but no one stirred.

"Did ivver a body see t' like!" Hutchings muttered between his teeth. "Nivver tell meh bit wat tha hev meade soome feckless mistake oop at yon pen, an' thrawed oot three sheep to ta pooar beast as dunnot belong ta t' same flock. Eh, bit she's a beauty! Brought them opp yance mair, she hev! Bat, me lad, ye suld hev been t'owder side, ye'll flyte them again—theear! No, t' creature's headed them brawly, varra brawly! Ah'd gie twaive punds mysel' any day, Ah wad. Theear—no—ay, theear's t' yan in!—an' nowder! She've dune it noo."

The old farmer's eyes dropped on his watch, and at the same moment a great roar of cheers broke out from the crowd. The young girl, who had gradually drawn nearer and nearer, grasped the wrist of her companion.

"Listen!" she cried. "Will he hev t' prize?"

"Weel, he might," cautiously admitted the old woman, "bit Bat hev a heap o' enemies. Ah wadna trist them to joodge fair. Besides"—she drew the girl yet closer—"Jenny, did ye see?"

The girl looked at her with anguish.

"They wadna," she stammered.

'Oh, ay, they wad, if they saw. Ah wadna trist yan o' them."

Hutchings, whose prophecy as to Flora's record had not been disproved, was the better able to bestow enthusiastic admiration on the last dog's marvelous sagacity.

"Twenty meenits she was; bit ah'll nivver belave there was nowder dog ond her dond it at aw in sooch a fog an' wid sooch contrary beasts. An' Ah'm mwoor wonderin' hoo Black Bat kept hissel in as lang."

"So am I," Dick assented heartily. "He gave that last obstinate beast a shove, and I should have done the same long before."

There was a momentary silence.

"T' last yan was it he strook?" asked the farmer in an unconcerned tone.

"The last. Didn't you see?"

"Ah canna say Ah did. Mebbe Ah was joost tekking t' time. Mebbe ye arena sure?"

"I'm sure enough," said Dick, with a laugh. Then, as a sudden light dawned upon him, he looked uneasy. "Why, you don't mean to say it makes any difference?"

"Weel, Ah dinnat reetly knaw," said Hutchings, cautiously. Ah cudna say. We'll hear bymeby wat t' joodges hev decided."

He left Dick's side and made his way towards other groups. Dick, hesitating whether to follow him or not, became aware that he was close to Miss Kennedy.

"That was worth seeing, was it not?" she said, drawing a deep breath.

"It was very fine indeed," Carmichael answered warmly. "I suppose you have a personal interest in all of these competitors?",

"Oh, yes," she said. "I know most of them very well, and I am particularly interested in Black Bat."

"He does not seem to have many other friends."

"No; but there is a romance connected with his dog's trial to-day. In spite of his bad reputation, there is a young girl who has been unkindly treated by her stepmother, to whom he has been very good. She is on the ground to-day, and if Lass wins the first prize they will be married. I do so hope she will!"

[TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE NEXT.]

MALICE drinketh up the greatest part of its own poison.

At a Man's Mercy.

BY J. K. L.

IT was a sweltering afternoon in August, and I was standing on the platform of the Great Northern Terminus, exchanging chaff with a party of friends, all young men like myself, who occupied a smoking car in the York express. I, like them, was off for my holiday, and I should have joined them had there been room.

As I stood there, a man, followed by a girl and a porter carrying a heap of rugs and such things, came along and entered the car next to my friends. The instinct one has in such things told me that they were a newly wedded couple going off on their honeymoon.

I did not like the look of the bridegroom at all. He was one of those cold, self-contained men, clean-shaven, thin lipped, hard eyed—which speak of selfishness and cruelty.

The bride—for such I took her to be—was quite a young girl. Her pale face, downcast eyes, and timid air did not bespeak the happy bride.

Without knowing why, I felt sorry for her. The man was sitting in the corner with his back to me. I could hear the harsh, rasping tones of his voice, though I could not hear what he said, and I could not help seeing the pained, uneasy look in the bloodless face of the girl who sat opposite.

Presently he rose and went to the other end of the car, and at the same moment a woman, clad in a rusty black shawl, came slowly along the line. As she caught sight of the bride's face she hurried up to her, put a letter into her hand, and immediately turned away.

The girl hastily, and I thought in a secretive way, tore open the letter, and began to read it.

As the train left the station I took care not to do more than glance at the lady, but I fancied that a transient expression of something that looked like gratitude flashed an instant from her dark blue eyes.

"Edith, I wish you to sit here," said the calm yet rasping voice of the man, pointing to the seat opposite to him. The words and tone were such as might have been used to a child, but the girl obeyed promptly without a murmur.

My blood boiled at his tone, but I had no means of resenting his rudeness. I began to think that, however sorry I might be for the girl who had been saddled with such a very uncongenial partner or master, I had no possible right to interfere, and that my wisest course would be to slip out of the car at the first station.

Looking up, I saw the girl's glorious eyes turned full upon me. The man was reading a newspaper which hid his face, yet we dared not speak. Communication of some sort was a necessity. In the hope that she might know the dumb alphabet, I practised a trick well known to most schoolboys, and spelt out on my fingers the words:—

"How can I help you?"

Quick as thought the reply came:—

"Help me to escape."

Then:—

"Are you not his wife?"

"Yes. We were married only this morning."

"Then it is impossible for me to help you. But you may leave your husband if you choose."

"I dare not."

The man turned his newspaper, and we looked in opposite directions. Then the lady took a letter out of her pocket, and from the envelope she took a small newspaper cutting. This she made up into a tiny ball and placed it in her lap. A little later she shook it off on the floor, and it rolled over to me. I picked it up and read it.

It was from a column of short news paragraphs, and ran as follows:—

"C. T. Stratton, who was on trial in the criminal court yesterday charged with the murder of Jane Ellerton, his wife's mother, by means of poison, was acquitted owing to the non-agreement of the jury. The difficulty of getting a certain class of criminals convicted is becoming a serious scandal in this part of the State. The same prisoner is strongly suspected of having made away with his wife by drowning her; but it was impossible to charge him with the crime, as the body of the unfortunate woman has not been recovered. Both women were insured for large amounts, and Mr. Stratton holds the policies. It is understood that he has left the State and has no intention of returning."

This was serious. What was I to do? To leave this innocent child, evidently frightened out of her life, at the mercy of a man who ought apparently to have been convicted of murder, was impossible. Yet how was I to find an excuse for intervening?

A thought struck me—was this really the man?

I stared at him a good deal for some minutes, and then suddenly exclaimed, holding out my hand with a broad smile:—

"Mr. Stratton, if I am not mistaken?"

"No, sir. Er—er—that is not my name."

He put his glass to his eye and stared at me, and I noticed that the hand with which he raised the eyeglass trembled, and he was white to the lips. I muttered an apology, bowed, and smiled.

Five minutes later I tried again.

"Pardon me, sir. The likeness is so striking. Pray tell me, had you a twin brother who resided at a place called Maryville?"

It was five seconds at least before the denial came. I was satisfied that he was the man.

The speed of the train slackened. We were about to stop.

"Edith, get your things together at once. We change cars here," said the husband.

"But I thought we were going right through."

"Will you do as you are bid?"

This was said in a tone of calm ferocity that made me long to strike the fellow in the mouth, but I said nothing.

When we stopped my fellow-passenger put his head out of the car window and bawled for a porter. It happened, however, that there was a local fair or something of the sort. The platform was crowded with people rushing about, and nobody attended to him. On the opposite side was a narrow wooden platform from which a local train was about to start.

An idea flashed through my brain.

Opening the door of the car leading to the local platform, I looked the girl straight in the eyes, at the same time making a motion with my head towards the other train.

She understood me; and, leaning over the back as he leant out of the window, I jostled him so rudely as to knock off his hat. It fell to the platform and rolled a little distance. I was profuse in my apologies. In an instant he had jumped out for his hat. As he did so his wife left the car, darted across the narrow platform, and was helped into the train by a friendly porter. It was already in motion, and by the time I had again taken my seat it had glided noiselessly out of the station.

I had barely resumed my seat when my fellow-passenger, having regained his hat and found a porter, re-entered the car.

One moment he gazed around him in bewilderment. The next he threw himself upon me, crying out, "You scoundrel, where's my wife?"

He was so filled with fury that it was all I could do to shake him off; and no sooner were we separated than he darted to the opposite window, looked along the deserted platform, tried the door, stared around as if in amazement, and peered under the seats as if he expected to find the missing girl hidden there. Again he turned upon me, but I rose and, without venturing any reply, made my way to another car.

My desire to know what had become of the escaped wife was so great, that at the next station I got out and went back. Next day I found her. She had taken lodgings at a farmhouse, and said she felt safer there than in London.

We had many conversations, and she told me she was an orphan, and that she had been practically forced by her uncle and aunt to marry the man, in spite of her strong dislike to him. But before my holiday was over I was compelled to leave the neighborhood of the farm. I could no longer conceal from myself—I could scarcely conceal from Edith—the strength of my love for her; and the fact remained that she was Stratton's wife. I went back to London.

Three months later my eyes fell on a paragraph in a morning paper which made my heart leap and then stand still. C. T. Stratton had been brought up at Bow Street on an extradition warrant, charged with swindling an insurance company of New York of twenty thousand dollars by pretending that his wife had been accidentally drowned.

It was commonly supposed that he had murdered her. This was not the case. But he had bullied her into remaining concealed while he made the company pay the amount of the policy. The woman had now turned up, and the company meant to make an example of Stratton.

But all this concerned me very little. The great point was that, as Stratton's wife was still alive, Edith was not really his wife.

I called on the prosecuting lawyer in order to satisfy myself of the identity of the prisoner with Edith's husband, and he told me that among the prisoner's papers had been found a blank form of proposal for a policy of insurance on the life of "Edith Stratton."

That very evening saw me at the farm, where Edith was still hiding; and clasping her in my arms, I told her that she was no man's wife, and should be no man's wife but mine.

For a while sobs and tears were my only answer. Her heart was overcharged—the shock of finding herself free was too sudded.

She was soon smiling through her tears, and telling me that her experience of the married state was not encouraging—she rather thought she would remain single.

Within a month we were married.

'TWAS HIS FIRST.—It was his first bicycle, and, of course, he was proud of it. He had taken a few lessons in a riding-school, and then had devoted a week to studying advertisements of various machines, so that he might be sure to get the best in the market.

"At last," he said, as he exhibited his purchase to a friend who had been riding a bicycle for several years, "I have got a bike and feel that I am now in a position to save money, for, of course, a man with a bicycle saves a great deal in the way of car fares and the like."

"Of course," remarked the friend.

"The expense is rather heavy at the start," persisted the man with the new machine, "but when you have finally bought your wheel that ends it."

"Well," said the friend hesitatingly, "of course, there are a number of little things about any machine that can be improved upon. It is all right for one who is willing to take things as they come and make the best of them, but the true bicyclist wouldn't think of sticking to the regulation tire that comes with the wheel."

"No?"

"Oh, no. A man who wants to be in the front rank must have a choice in the matter of tires. Now, I would advise you to take your bicycle out and have it fitted with one of the famous Bully-Best Dupiex tires."

"If that's the proper thing," said the other man, with a sigh, "of course I'll do it. But I thought when you bought a bicycle you bought it all."

"You do, after a fashion," admitted the friend, "and, if you are not at all particular, it's all right, I suppose; but if you want to be anybody at all in the bicycle world, I'd advise you to throw that saddle away and get a Double-Action Twister. And the handle-bars are not at all the correct thing, either.

"If you have any respect for yourself as a bicyclist, you'll get the Double-Drop wooden handle bars, and have your pedals changed, too. There's a much better pedal on the market than the one they've given you with this machine. I see you have a Full Moon lamp with it, too. That ought to be replaced with a——"

"Now, look here," interrupted the beginner, "if it's necessary to buy a bicycle in sections in order to be anybody, why didn't you give me a tip to begin that way, and I could have saved a lot of money?"

But the man who had been riding several years, simply became disgusted with the other's lack of enthusiasm and went away muttering that some people never would be able to understand the theory of bicycling.

THE favorable reception accorded by the Dowager Empress of China in 1895 to the Chinese New Testament, given to her in the name of 10,000 Protestant women of China suggested to the American and British Bible societies the idea of making a similar present to the Emperor of Japan. Accordingly, a large folio Bible in the English language has been specially prepared and sent to the emperor in the name of the Bible societies who are engaged in publishing and circulating the scriptures in Japan.

Bric-a-Brac.

ONIONS AND GARLIC.—There is a tradition in the East that, when Satan stepped out of the Garden of Eden after the Fall of Man, onions sprang up from the spot where he placed his right foot, and garlic from that which his left one touched.

WHY SO NAMED.—In the early English coinage the silver penny was minted with a deep cross. When it was broken into two parts, each was a halfpenny, and, when into four, each was a fourthing, or farthing.

ERRORS IN THE BOOK.—To the list of Bibles named after curious typographical mistakes an important addition is made in the so called "Printers'" Bible, which contains perhaps the most strongly-appropriate mis-reading of any—"Printers have persecuted me without a cause" (Psalm cxix. 161), "printers" being substituted for "princes."

BENEDICTION KNIVES.—In the sixteenth century a curious class of knives was sometimes used, the blades of which had on one side the musical notes to the benediction of the table, or grace before meat, and on the other side the grace after meat. The set of these knives usually consisted of four. They were kept in an upright case of stamped leather, and were placed before the singers.

NO STONE UNTURNED.—The origin of the command, "Don't leave a stone unturned," is said to be this: After one of the battles of antiquity, the defeated general hid a vast amount of treasure in a field. A Theban who was aware of the fact bought the field and searched long for the hidden wealth, but could not find it. At last he sought the oracle of Delphi for advice, and was told that if he would turn over every stone in the field he would discover what he desired. He did so, and found the treasure.

THE BANKRUPT.—Few words have so remarkable a history as "bankrupt." The money-changers of Italy had benches or stalls in the bourse or exchange in former times. At these they conducted their ordinary business. When any of them fell back in the world and became insolvent, his bench was broken, and the name of "broken bench," or banco rotto, was given to him. When the word was first adopted into English, it was nearer the Italian than it now is, being "bankerout," instead of "bankrupt."

ABOUT THE SPIDER.—Nine people out of ten class the spider as an insect; this, however, is not the case. With scorpions and mites spiders form a class in the animal kingdom by themselves. Spiders differ from insects in five main particulars: Their eyes are simple instead of compound; they have eight legs in place of six; they do not pass through the metamorphoses which are characteristic of insects; they have no antennæ, and their breathing is accomplished by means of organs which combine the functions of lungs and gills, instead of by tubes pervading their bodies. These points of distinction are sufficient to determine the fact that it is impossible to class spiders as insects.

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A LITTLE LIFE.

BY C. E. W.

Two little feet, so small, so light,
That never rest from morn to night,
Are the whole sum of my delight!

Two little eyes of speedwell blue
That open every morn anew
With some fair wonder still to view.

Two little lips, whose kisses sweet
My earliest waking always greet,
And some soft word of love repeat.

Two little hands, to lead me higher,
To keep alight the smouldering fire
That is the grave of our desire.

One little heart, my heart to keep,
To rescue me from many a deep,
To still my aching into sleep.

Oh, little life, God gave to me,
In that great city by the sea,
To love for all eternity—
May He keep watch 'twixt thee and me!

WON AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A TERRIBLE PENALTY," "HIS DEAREST SIN," "MISS FORRISTER'S LAND STEWARD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

"YOU need not be, my dear," she remarked. "Lord Ferndale is delightfully general in his admiration. There is always safety in numbers, you know."

"Yes; that is my only consolation!" said Lady Ferndale, with mock gravity. "Though Edward has concentrated his attentions upon Miss Deane, of late. Is that he talking to her now?" Lady Ferndale was short-sighted.

Lady Roborough put up her eyeglasses and surveyed Decima and her male companion.

"No; that is young Illminster," she said. There was a certain significance in her tone, and Lady Ferndale glanced at her.

"What a sweet girl she is!" she said, musingly. "Now, I really don't think any of us were quite so lovely as she is," she added.

"I suppose she is. Oh, yes, of course, she is," assented Lady Roborough, "but, to tell the truth, I never think of her prettiness when I am with her. There is something about her that 'passeth show,' as our friend Hamlet says,"

"I know," said Lady Ferndale. "She fascinates me, and I quite sympathize with Edward; indeed, I'm rather more in love with her than he is."

"And yet," said Lady Roborough, still looking towards Decima, "there are girls who are as beautiful, and certainly more clever and accomplished. For instance, you scarcely ever hear her say anything brilliant or witty."

"I don't know that I particularly care for brilliant or witty girls," interpolated Lady Ferndale.

"And she has few accomplishments. Her charm is a nameless one, or difficult to describe. It must be—do you think it is her goodness?" she asked, doubtfully. "Sometimes I think it is. She is awfully good; you know she was Lady Pauline's ward or charge. And yet there isn't a trace of the Pharisee in her."

"Perhaps it's her gentleness," suggested Lady Ferndale. "So few girls have that nowadays. I'm afraid it's rather unfashionable. Girls like to be thought fast and smart.' Dear me, how I hate that word!—and are ashamed of possessing that inconvenient thing—a heart. Sometimes I'm inclined to think that in the next generation or two it will be only the men who will be capable of the 'emotions.' Now, Decima Deane is like a sensitive leaf."

"Too sensitive, I'm afraid," said Lady Roborough.

"Ah, yes; and yet how admirably self-contained and self-possessed she is! I like to sit and watch her face—it is like a mirror, and yet so grave and calm, and—what do you call it?—not impassive, but—"

"All serene," suggested Lady Roborough.

Lady Ferndale laughed.

"That sounds like slang!" she said. "But I see you know what I mean. She looks to me like one of those rare lilies which have stood the strain of wind and rain, and tho' they still stand erect, show something of the ordeal through which they have passed."

"There is nothing faded about our lily, though," said Lady Roborough. "She is still a girl, and as fresh as a newly-opened blossom."

"Yes. Is she quite well now?" asked Lady Ferndale. "She was so very ill, and looked so pale and frail for so long, that I began to fear the lily would not hold up its head again."

"She is better—quite well, I think. She is really very strong; indeed, she must be, or she would not have pulled through. She was playing tennis just now—a hard game, and she was on the winning side."

"I wonder she has not married," said Lady Ferndale. "I am glad her engagement with that man, Mr. Mershon, was broken off. What has become of him—do you know?"

Lady Roborough shook her head.

"No; he let The Firs more than a year ago. It is for sale, as you know. I don't know what has become of him; but I think I heard that he had settled in some place on the Continent. Yes," she went on, after a pause, "it is strange that Decima does not marry. She has had one or two offers during the last twelve months, I know, though she—you know her!—has, of course, not told me of them."

"And there will be a third, directly," said Lady Ferndale. "That is Lord Illminster with her, is it not?"

"Yes. Oh, yes! he will propose to her. He is dying to do so, for he is very much in love with her. It is an open secret; indeed, he has told me, and has asked me to help him. But I declined. Decima is not like most girls; and one feels that one would be treading on very delicate ground if one ventured to play the part of matchmaker with her."

Lady Ferndale nodded, sympathetically.

"I should not like to venture—I could not! Do you think she will accept him?"

"I don't know. Sometimes I think she may; at others, I think not."

"That's very non-committal, my dear!" responded Lady Ferndale, with a smile.

"It expresses what I feel exactly. But Decima, without meaning it, of course—for she is simplicity itself—is rather deceptive.

"For instance, sometimes she will be quite—quite friendly to Lord Illminster, and he will go about looking as happy as a sandboy; and presently he will come to me and make dolorous moan, and complain that Miss Deane has either passed him in the road with a cold bow, or answered him so absently, and with such a preoccupied, dreamy manner, that he is sure there is no hope for him."

"Poor fellow! How I pity him! Imagine being really in love with Decima Deane! How a man could suffer!"

"Oh, he suffers badly enough," assented Lady Roborough, placidly. "But I don't feel for him so much. I think of Decima. I want her to be happy."

"And she is not now?"

Lady Roborough looked doubtful, and rather sad.

"I don't know. I'm afraid not. That absent, dreamy look, which makes poor Lord Illminster so wretched, is too often on her face. It comes quite suddenly, just after she has been talking and laughing quite brightly, as if she had suddenly remembered something. The expression passes quickly enough sometimes, but it has been there, and one cannot forget it."

"Wasn't—wasn't there something between her and Lord Gaunt?" said Lady Ferndale, hesitatingly, and in a low voice.

"I don't know. They were very much together—she helped him in the village. Indeed, all the great improvements—But you know all about that as well as I do. But Lord Gaunt was so much older, and was married—though we did not know it. Oh, no, there was nothing—how could there be?"

"There was something said—hinted—at the trial."

"Oh, no! She chanced to call upon her brother when Lord Gaunt went to his rooms that night. There was some suggestion, some hint of a love affair between them; but it must have been groundless. Otherwise, why is he not here?"

"Yes; nothing has been seen of him since the trial," remarked Lady Ferndale.

"No," said Lady Roborough. "He is abroad, in Africa; one reads about him every now and then. I don't suppose he will ever come back to England."

"So Edward says. What a pity it is that a place like Lealmore should be shut up! There seems a fate in it. Now, I pity Lord Gaunt. I liked him so much."

"So did we all; and we all pity him," said Lady Roborough, with a sigh. "But what will you? There is one great mistake which a man can commit; an unfortunate marriage; and he can never dodge the consequences. It is the one piece of folly which is always attended by its Nemesis."

"Poor Lord Gaunt! And Decima lives all alone with her father. Lady Pauline has gone, has she not?"

"Oh, yes, some time ago. Yes, she is alone with her father. Her brother is at Sandhurst. He passed last March. He worked terribly hard, and won his way back into all our hearts before he left."

"It must be a great responsibility for her," said Lady Ferndale. "Mr. Deane is more absorbed in his fads than ever, isn't he? I saw him for a few minutes once, when I called; and I think he was scarcely conscious of my presence."

"Yes; it is a great responsibility," said Lady Roborough. "But Decima is not the girl to shirk it. No daughter could be more loving and devoted."

"What a wife some happy man will have! I hope he will be Lord Illminster; he is a fine young fellow, and it would be a good match."

"Hush, she is coming!" said Lady Roborough, warningly, as Decima came alone across the lawn, with her racket in her hand. "Well, my dear; what have you done with Lord Illminster?" asked the old lady. "Come into the shade."

She took Decima's hand, and drew her into the chair beside her, and kept the small hand, and patted it caressingly. Everyone felt a strong temptation to pat and caress the girl.

"Lord Illminster has gone to play tennis," said Decima. "I was down for the set, but I felt rather tired, and knew he would lose if I played; so I asked him to get a stronger partner."

"For which he was very grateful, I'm sure," remarked her ladyship, drily.

"Oh, yes," said Decima, innocently. "He plays so well; and it would have been a pity to make him lose his set."

"Yes, a great pity," assented Lady Roborough, as drily as before. "Will you have some tea, my dear?" She looked round for one of the neat maid-servants who were in attendance, but Decima rose.

"I'll get a cup. And may I bring some for you and Lady Ferndale?"

"Isn't that like her!" said the old lady, when Decima was out of hearing. "You can never, by any chance, tempt her to think of herself only. Thank you, my dear," as Decima came back, with the maid bearing the tray. "And have you been enjoying yourself?"

"Yes; very much," said Decima with her soft, bright smile. "It is so lovely here; and everyone is so happy, that it makes one happy just to be with them. And I have been on the lake."

"Yes? Who rowed you, dear?"

"Lord Illminster," said Decima, as innocently and unconsciously as before. "And I played two sets; and Lord Illminster tried to teach me bowls, but I was very stupid and awkward—"

"Yes? I hope he wasn't angry."

"Angry? Lord Illminster!" Decima laughed. "Oh, no; I don't think he could be; he is always so patient and kind."

The two elder women exchanged glances; but Lady Roborough shook her head slightly. She was too much a woman of the world not to know that when a young girl is in love with a man she is not given to open praise of him.

"And when did you hear from your brother, Decima?" asked Lady Roborough, changing the subject with suspicious abruptness.

Decima's face lit up.

"Oh, yesterday. Such a delightful letter! It was almost as if Bobby were talking. I don't think anyone in the world can be funnier than he is, when he chooses. Yes; it was just like hearing him talk. And he is so popular, one can see! Let me try and remember some of the things he says—but you want to hear him say them."

She stopped suddenly and rather shyly, for she was always rather carried out of herself when Bobby was on the tapis. A young man had sauntered up behind the three ladies.

"Weren't you speaking of Lord Gaunt just now, Lady Ferndale, and asking if anyone had heard of him? I happened to hear you mention his name, and I thought you would like to know—"

Lady Roborough looked up at his face quickly, and with the expression which a lady's face wears when she wishes to silence the speaker; but the young man was rather short-sighted, and did not notice her look. Alas! he was young; and with most of us, it is not until we have reached "forty year," that we learn the full significance of a lady's glance!

"I've just heard of him," he went on, fully convinced that he was making himself agreeable, and imparting keenly desired intelligence. "One of the men of his exploring party—you know, Lord Gaunt is exploring the source of the Oawanji."

"Yes, oh, yes, we know," said Lady Roborough, rather curtly, very curtly for her; but he blundered on.

He was not a native of the place, but only a visitor at one of the neighboring houses, and had probably not heard the name of the young lady who sat so quietly beside the two old ladies, and had certainly never heard of it in connection with Lord Gaunt. "This man dined at the Travelers'—the Club, you know—"

"We've all heard of the Travelers, Mr. Jones," said Lady Ferndale, coldly.

"Yes." Mr. Jones fixed his eye-glass. "In fact, we were giving him a little dinner in honor of his return. He came home on sick leave, you know. He told us a lot about the expedition, but nearly all his talk was about Lord Gaunt.

"It seems that the party had a particularly rough time of it; no end of perils and privations, you know. I forget how many days they were without food and water; and once or twice they had to fight their way through untriendly tribes—natives, you know; and they can fight. And he says that Lord Gaunt is a—a regular brick. That was his word, you know; and, according to him, it is just the right one."

Lady Roborough glanced at Decima. She was leaning back in her chair, and her face pale; but her eyes were not downcast, but fixed before her, and the dreamy expression Lady Roborough had spoken of was in them. She seemed as if she were far away, as if she were scarcely listening.

"He says," continued Mr Jones, who was enjoying himself exceedingly, "that Lord Gaunt is simply worshipped by them all; certainly he—the man who has come back—is mad enough about him!—and that, whenever there was anything in the way of hard times or fighting, Lord Gaunt always took the lion's share. He says that, in his opinion, Lord Gaunt doesn't know what fear is.

"Always in the front when they were attacked, and never down on his luck for a moment! He says that Lord Gaunt marched at the head of his party for three days, with a wound in his thigh that would have sent any other man to hospital for three months—"

Lady Roborough broke in at this point, with a kind of desperation.

"Oh, thank you, very much, Mr. Jones!" she said, sweetly—too sweetly. "It's very good of you to tell us this, but—but would you be so kind as to go over to the band, and ask them to play again?"

Mr. Jones looked rather bewildered at this decapitation of his little story, but he bleated, blandly:

"Certainly! certainly! Delighted, Lady Roborough!" and took himself off.

Decima sat a full minute without moving; then her lips parted and a long sigh escaped them softly—so softly that only Lady Roborough heard it—and she glanced at the watch at her waist—a present from Bobby.

"It is time for me to go, Lady Roborough," she said, and she spoke quite naturally, and even with a smile. "My father always likes me to be home a little before dinner; and, indeed," smiling, "if I were not, he would not get dressed!"

Lady Roborough nodded. She carefully avoided looking at the lovely face for a moment or two.

"And what is the most wonderful invention, Decima?"

Decima smiled again, but only for an instant, as she replied, gently:

"It is something for extinguishing fires, I think. I don't know quite; but I think it is a kind of shell which you throw into the flames, and it explodes."

"Sounds as if it were more likely to cause fire than to quench it," remarked Lady Roborough. "Tell them to bring a carriage round for Miss Deane, please," she said to one of the servants.

"Oh, no! I can walk," said Decima.

"I've no doubt you can; but you won't, my dear," said Lady Roborough, drily. "My dear Decima, you are too accustomed to having your own way. And so you grow selfish and self-opinionated."

A look of alarm and penitence began to steal over the sweet face; and Lady Roborough exclaimed:

"You little goose!" and, drawing the face down to her, kissed it tenderly.

As she leant back in the carriage, Decima closed her eyes, and pictured Gaunt fighting his way at the head of the weary and fever-stricken expedition, thought of him suffering "in silence and in strength," and her lips murmured his name and a prayer for him as the tears stole down her cheeks.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ONE evening, a fortnight later, Decima dined at the Ferndales'. It had not been a dinner party, or she would not have gone without her father. The Ferndales were very fond of her—who was not!—and she had spent a very enjoyable evening; Lady Ferndale had made much of her, and Lord Ferndale had exerted himself to amuse her.

Their daughter was married, and the Ferndales were quite ready and anxious to take her into their girl's absent place. They had pressed her to stay that night, but she had come home because she knew that, even if her father did not miss her, that he could not be left.

She saw the light burning in his workroom as she went up the path, and she when straight to him.

He had not dressed for dinner that night, and he looked more untidy and dusty even than usual. Two gas jets were flaring away, and he was standing at his bench filling some glass tubes with a liquid which he poured from an iron retort.

"Have you not finished, father?" she said. "It is very late, dear!"

"Is it?" he said, pushing his unkempt hair aside; "I didn't know I've been busy—very busy. This is a wonderful idea of mine, Decima! Wonderful! It surpasses anything I have hitherto done. It will simply revolutionize the present unsatisfactory system of dealing with fires."

"I am very glad, dear," said Decima. "But will you not come to bed now? Let me turn out the lights."

"Presently—presently!" he said. "This invention of mine is simplicity itself. Of course, there are plenty of hand-grenades, and—er—glass bombs in the market; but this is something quite new; and its action is totally different to that upon which the others depend. You see this tube? It contains a fluid—which, of course, is my secret; it's marvellous that I should hit upon it! It possesses most extraordinary qualities."

"It smells very strange and—and rather nasty," said Decima. "I hope it isn't dangerous, dear!"

"Dangerous!" he said, impatiently. "Oh, no! That is, it could only be dangerous in the hands of ignorant persons; but I intend to have full directions for its use pasted on each tube.

"All you have to do, in the event of fire, is to throw one of these tubes, not at flames—there may be some small danger then, I admit—not at the flames, but at the point which they would reach if they remained unchecked.

"A slight explosion then takes place, the flames are dispersed, choked, so to speak, and your fire, however fierce, is extinguished. I have been making some experiments to-night—I will show you——"

He was about to light a roll of paper at the gas jet, but Decima held his arm.

"Not to-night and in this crowded room, father!" she pleaded. "Show me to-morrow, in some safer place, in the open air. Come to bed now, dear, you look tired."

"I am not at all tired," he said; "and there is not the least need for apprehension or alarm, as I could prove to you in a moment. But I will show you to-morrow. Wait a moment," he added, as Decima turned out one of the gas jets.

He began to put the evil-smelling things aside, but paused, and pushed his hand through his hair.

"There was something I wanted to tell you," he said; "I can't think what it was. It was important too. Dear me! I can't remember for a moment." He stared at her vacantly, then went on, as if he suddenly remembered. "Ah, yes! Lord Illminster called this afternoon."

"Lord Illminster?" said Decima, with some surprise. "Why did he call? He has never been here before. What did he want?"

His eyes and hands wandered towards the precious tubes, and Decima had to repeat her question.

"Eh?" he said, "Ah, yes! He came to see you as well as me!"

"To see me?" said Decima. "Oh, about the archery meeting, I suppose? Lord Illminster asked me to help."

"No; it wasn't about archery," said Mr. Deane; "at least, I don't think he mentioned the word 'archery'—he may have done; it's quite possible. He talked a great deal, and seemed a remarkably pleasant and well-informed young man. When I say 'well-informed,' I mean on general subjects.

"I could not get him to understand any of my inventions. But he admitted, very modestly, that his scientific education had been neglected. No! the purport of his visit was to ask me if I would give my consent to proposing to you."

"Father!" exclaimed Decima, her face growing red for a moment.

"Yes," said Mr. Deane, as if they were discussing an unimportant detail. "You seem surprised. Were you not aware of his intentions?"

"No!" said Decima, more to herself than to him. "I never thought—never suspected——"

"He made his request in an extremely nice manner," said Mr. Deane, turning to the bench, and arranging some tools absently; "and I am quite sure that he is very much in earnest. As I've said, he seems to me an exceedingly pleasant and agreeable young man."

"What—what did you say, father?" faltered Decima.

"Oh, I gave my consent," he said.

"Oh, father!" she breathed. "Why did you—how could you? I——"

"Why not?" said Mr. Deane, staring at her. "Surely you can have no objection to him, Decima? He is young, and, I think, from what little I saw of him, good-looking. He is an earl—or is the Illminster's a barony? I forget.

"And I think he said that the estate was a large one, and that there would be proper settlements. In fact, I inferred from his remarks that he would leave that detail to the lawyers.

"I told him that it was quite unimportant, because this last invention of mine would place you far beyond the need of any settlement—that, in fact, you would probably be one of the largest heiresses in England. He is coming to-morrow to see you; and, really, Decima, I think you would do well to accept him.

"You are still young, absurdly young, but not too young to be married; and now that you have broken your engagement with Mr. Mershon——" His mind wandered, and he rumpled his hair, and stared at her vacantly. "Yes; I should advise you to accept Lord Illminster."

Decima was pale now, and her face was very sad.

"I—I cannot, father!" she said, in a low voice.

"No?" he said, calmly. "Why not?"

"I do not—love—care for him," she said. "He is very good and kind—but I could not marry him. I shall never marry anyone. She smiled wanly. "I am always going to stay with you, dear, and take care of you."

"That's absurd," he said, pettishly. "You speak as if I were a child, and incapable of taking care of myself! And, as a matter of fact, I don't suppose that there is a more practical man in the world than I am. You had better tell Lord Illminster, when he comes to-morrow, that you accept."

"I will tell him— No; I will write to him. Come now, father."

She extinguished the other gas jet, after looking round carefully, and led him away. He maundered up and down the drawing-room for some time, talking, not of Lord Illminster and his proposal, which he had already completely forgotten, but of his last invention for the extinction of fire; but, after awhile, Decima got him up to his room, and in the solitude of her own was free to think of Lord Illminster's proposal.

She had had no suspicion of it. She regarded herself as so different to other girls, as one to whom marriage was an impossibility, that she had unconsciously felt that others also must so regard her. She had loved one man with all her heart and soul, and, though she could never be his wife, she must go on loving him while life lasted.

She should probably never see him again, but she was his still. She was sorry for Lord Illminster, sorry that she had, all unwittingly, been so friendly with him.

As her father had said, he was young and good-looking, and in every way desirable; but Decima had no heart to give him; it had flown from her bosom long ago, and was nestling beside Lord Gaunt's. And it would nestle there while it beat.

She wrote a short letter to Lord Illminster; a letter of refusal, couched in the gentlest phrases; but definite. She could not have slept with the letter unwritten; and, having written it, she dismissed him from her mind, and, with her last waking thoughts, thought of the man she loved, but whom she should never marry.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

IN some of the mountain passes in Austria there are to be found sign-boards bearing an inscription in German which reads: "Return Forbidden." These passes are so narrow and steep that when once a traveler has started on the upward journey he is forbidden to turn backward for fear of endangering the lives of those behind him.

His Revenge.

BY P. M. O.

THAT Moggs was parvenu his very name proclaimed in trumpet tones; his appearance confirmed it, and his manners settled it beyond cavilling. But he had the saving virtue of generosity, and his amiability, honesty, and good temper were such that, as we persuaded ourselves, on account of these inestimable qualities, and not at all by reason of his riches, also quite inestimable, he was elected a member of our club.

Moggs disclosed to Haviland and myself, who proposed him, that his reason for wishing to join us was that he was by way of being "literary and artistic and all that sort of thing, you know," and as we are nearly all journalists, artists, or "minors," he felt that he would be in congenial society and enjoy ample opportunities of discussing his favorite topics.

And he really did enjoy them, and made appalling use of them. The first time Scott, to whom a philosophic doubter has just made some public reference, came under discussion, Moggs broke in with:

"Do you mean the chap who wrote 'The Midnight Charge of Kassassin?'"

"What?" shrieked our only poet (the minors do not count), with nascent horror in his eyes.

The rest of us laughed, as a joke might have been intended, and Moggs was a new member and a rich one. Moggs laughed, too, and tried to look as if he had said a good thing.

But presently Haviland dexterously led the conversation on to a pet theory of his—the influence of Greek art on Tennyson—and our only poet and the editor of the New Monthly were soon in hot controversy with him.

My chances of interposition being thus remote, I took to watching Moggs, who was listening open-eared and open-eyed, and evidently waiting for an opportunity of joining in. The chance came in a minute or two, and he rushed fiercely into the fray.

"Oh, come, Haviland," he cried, "that won't do at all. Take the 'May Queen,' for instance; there's nothing Greek about that—all about snowdrops, and violets, and marigolds. I don't believe they have such flowers in Greece. Or take Lady Clare Vere de Vere,' or 'The Charge of the Light Brigade,' or any other of the best pieces, and you will find the same thing—all thoroughly English."

Thereafter we spent many nights in fruitless efforts to plumb the depths of Moggs' untathomable ignorance, and to find reasons for his unaccountable tastes. He spoke to us with reverent awe of Harrison Ainsworth, and Longfellow appealed to him powerfully.

He mixed up Walt Whitman and Whittier, and spoke of Rossetti as a musical composer, and of Ibsen as a Restoration dramatist. He would frequently discuss art with Revelson, our only academician.

At last from a source of amusement he swelled into a superfluous bore. In his presence Haviland and I took to discussing the classics, and as they waxed stale we would gravely weigh up Aristotle's demerits as a tragedian and praise Horace.

But Moggs took to reading the Classical Dictionary, and, joining briskly in the conversation, would roll out reams of Lempriere, until at last he became more intolerable when quoting than when original.

"Try prosody," one night Haviland whispered to me, inspired by a singularly happy thought, and thereupon we fell into a keen argument about asclepiads, iambics and other prosodical furniture.

Mogg sat silent and abashed. It was torture to him, who was thus reduced to silence, but the gratitude of our fellow members was ours, and Revelson even talked of getting up a testimonial to us.

And then Moggs asked us to dine with him, to meet two of his American friends. "And I shall be much obliged if you two fellows will take the conversation into your own hands," he added.

We promised that we would, and the next evening sought the club dining-room to fulfill our promise and to feast at Moggs' expense.

For our greater privacy a corner table had been screened off, and here we found our host and the two Americans, the elder of whom, Mr. Jeffkins, a man about sixty, impressed me as being stern even to sourness. Little was said during dinner, but as soon as coffee was served Mr. Jeffkins turned to Moggs and asked:

"Have you heard the latest development in bacon?"

"Fifteen points up," said Mr. Slode, the other guest.

"Are they talking about the runner or golf?" muttered Haviland.

"And spot?" inquired Moggs.

"Spot is easy, sir."

Then, of course, I saw they were discussing billiards, so I broke in. "It may be for Pearl, but I doubt it if it is for Bacon."

"It is not a subject for jesting, young sir," said Mr. Jeffkins, "for coupled with some apprehensions over a corner with lighter offerings, there is a bad scare among September shorts."

"Oh! this is all Choctaw to me," groaned Haviland aside to me. Then aloud, "Why, sir, why?"

"You ask why, sir!" cried Mr. Jeffkins, disdainfully. "Because the New York bulls——"

"Ah! we don't think much of those cattle here," said Haviland.

"They've squeezed the Britisher before now, sir," said Mr. Slode, with severity.

"So they might a cowboy of any nationality," said I, with a confused notion of a stampede of cattle rushing from quay to deck and crushing an unfortunate compatriot against the gangway.

It greatly diminished my self-complacency to notice the air of contempt with which Mr. Jeffkins resumed the conversation. Then for a dreadful half-hour Haviland and I sat confused and bewildered, as there hurled in the air such mysterious and untranslatable phrases as "pipe-line certificates," "stop loss orders," "healthy undertone," "Grangers leading," "in unison with a strong hog market," &c. At last Mr. Jeffkins, waxing excited, proclaimed in solemn tones:

"On receipt of higher cables a bearish disposition developed itself in New York, and it is reflected in this country, as your Liverpool advices will show you."

"Mr. Jeffkins," I said solemnly, feeling it my duty to do my utmost to allay the international ill-feeling to which he had evidently alluded, "as far as the bearish disposition of this country is concerned, it is directed against Germany—be sure of that. It was not the higher cables, but the Kaiser's telegram that occasioned it."

Messrs. Jeffkins and Slode exchanged pitying glances and then took leave of their host with profuse thanks for his hospitality. Turning to Haviland and myself, Mr. Jeffkins said slowly, solemnly, and offensively:

"In America, young sirs, we do not discuss matters of incalculable moment with frivolity, and we are careful not to engage in any trade until we have learnt the rudiments of it."

Before we could say a word in reply, he had disappeared with Moggs and his friend.

"What the deuce did he mean by that last remark?" I said.

Then there was a loud laugh, the screen was torn aside and disclosed Revelson and three other members roaring with laughter.

"It means," said Revelson, at last, "that Moggs told his friends that you were leading members of the Corn Exchange, and the Americans have gone away thinking you two of the greatest ignoramuses they ever met."

Then that horrible jargon they were talking is——"

"The language of the New York Exchange. I think Moggs can cry quits over the minor asclepiads, can't he?"

Then Haviland and I rushed out with murder in our hearts in search of Moggs, returning when the search was fruitless to such solace as no mere aerated waters can afford.

HOME.—Home means rest, familiarity, love, truth, a fruitful waste of time, self-forgetfulness, a thousand acts of happy self-sacrifice. It is the true life, the end in itself, for which almost everything else is a mere instrument or preparation. It is old-fashioned doctrine, but none the less true. The real test of what a man verily is is his home life.

The man who cares nothing for home, who does nothing to make his home happy, who is for ever longing for new faces and new scenes, may not necessarily be vicious; but he is "in a parlous state," and the ready prey for the great enemy of souls. And the wife who cannot make a home may be very beautiful and very brilliant, "the observed of all observers," the belle of her set, the best-known name in society; but, after all, she lacks that something, that pearl of great price, without which she comes short of true womanliness.

BETTER THAN ALL.

BY C. J.

I love—what do I not love? Earth and air
Find space within my heart, and myriad things
You would not deign to heed are cherished there,
And vibrate on its very inmost strings.

I love the summer, winter stars like friends
I gaze at them, when you are far from me,
Till I grow blind with tears; those far-off lights
Can watch you, whom I long in vain to see.

I love all good and noble souls. I heard
One speak of you but lately; and for days,
Only to think of it, my heart was stirred
In tender memory of such generous praise.

I love all those who love you, all who owe
Comfort to you; and I can find regret
Even for those poor hearts who once could know
And once could love you, and will now forget.

Would you have loved me had you known before
I loved so many things—still you the best?
Dearest, remember that I love you more—
O more a thousand times—than all the rest!

Sonia.

BY J. G. M.

IT was on the high road near the great forest of Tchernov, which separates, at one point, Russian Poland from Germany. A man with ragged clothes and unkempt and tangled hair crept out of the low brushwood which lay between the road and the forest, making his way stealthily on his hands and knees.

He gave one quick glance up and down the white road, and then drew back quickly into his hiding place. Far away to the right was a cloud of dust; a vehicle with two horses was being driven rapidly towards him.

A few moments later it was close to him; and the bright black eyes peering through the branches of a stunted fir saw that it was a drosky driven by a man who was standing up unsteadily, lashing the two horses, and shouting out the words of a German love song. The rapid motion of the drosky did not altogether explain the unsteadiness of the driver, who swayed in his place.

"Drunk—and a German!" said the hiding man to himself; and he came to a prompt decision.

As the vehicle passed him, he stood up erect by the wayside and called in German to the driver. In a moment the two shaggy horses were drawn back on their haunches, and the German turned quickly, almost overbalancing himself.

"Whence, in the name of the fiend, do you come?" he called out, in surprise; and the other man replied that he had been sitting at the side of the road.

The driver shook his head.

"That I'm sure you were not, my friend! Perhaps you think I am drunk and cannot see properly?"

The other made no reply, and the German went on:

"I am not drunk. But a man must drink a little during the carriage feast, or how would he stand everybody staring at him? I will make you merry enough, too, if you will come with me, for I have a bottle here to keep me company. May the foul fiend torment me for having no other companion to talk to and keep my courage up! I can think of nothing but what I must go through. Were you ever married?"

"No, friend," the man with the tangled hair answered gravely.

"Ah, you can't tell what it is then! But don't stand there! You want a ride, I suppose? Will you come to the wedding? I have brought no other guest, so they will make room for you. Get in!"

The stranger hesitated.

"Which way leads to the frontier?" he asked, as if on that question depended his answer.

Evidently it aroused the German's suspicion.

"What—you want to get into my country?" he said.

"Yes, friend."

"Well, jump in; I will take you. You have a passport, I suppose?"

"Yes."

It was an untruth—and the ragged man was evidently unused to telling falsehoods. He got into the vehicle slowly, as if uncertain what to do. As he climbed in by the German's side, there was the sharp ring of metal.

"What is that?" asked the drunken bridegroom, looking down at his companion's foot.

The stranger drew it underneath him.

"My boot struck on the iron," he said.

"To me it sounded like iron on iron. Why do you fold your arms like that?"

There was a moment's silence; then the man who had crept through the brushwood answered:

"It is of no use my trying to deceive you, friend." He moved his arms as he spoke, and showed a chain on each wrist. There was a ring of iron, too, on his right ankle.

"I broke the chain and got away," he said briefly. "They were sending me to St. Petersburg. From there it would have been Siberia. I have been three days and three nights in the forest trying to reach the frontier. You are a German, and love freedom; you will help me to gain it?"

The driver laughed.

"You thought I was too drunk to notice it! I guessed at once what you were; but fear not, my friend—I will get you into my country. Only come with me. It is lucky I met you, or I should have gone mad thinking of my wedding. Let me tell you about it." He ran on talking, interrupting the Russian's wild expressions of gratitude.

Sonia, his fiancee, was a Russian. She was not pretty, but her father had money. She was far too black and slim for him. Ulrich Gobatz liked women plump and rosy; but the money was a great thing. Once married, what did it matter whether his wife was as beautiful as the angels or as ugly as the fiend?

The escaped prisoner listened, interrupting his companion now and then to ask questions about the road. How far was it now from the frontier? How soon would they reach the barrier where their passports would be examined?

"I lied, of course," he said; "I have no passport, and shall have to make my way through the forest again, leaving the road."

"I could hide you at the back of the drosky," replied the German. "Get down here and let us see." He stopped the horses as he spoke, and turned to watch the Russian fugitive creep into the space at the back of the drosky. "Put your arms behind your back—so—then you will be able to squeeze in farther."

The Russian followed the advice of the German, who at once put his knees down upon the fugitive's shoulders and began to tie his arms together securely with a piece of rope, the Russian's position rendering him powerless to resist.

"There, my friend," said the German cheerfully—"I think I can count on twelve roubles for giving you back to the Russian police, who no doubt will have missed you. I will not take you with me to Raskow, though, or that rascally father-in-law of mine will want half the money."

He pulled his prisoner, now securely bound, out of the drosky and laid him on the road in the dust. Then, taking a leaf out of his note-book, he wrote these words in Russian:

"This is the prisoner of Ulrich Gobatz, landed proprietor of Bomdorf, who claims any reward that may be offered."

"There, my friend—you may wait till my wedding is over and I have time to fetch you," he said, as he pinned the paper on the Russian's back; and he turned to his wagon laughing.

As he entered the drosky, he glanced back and saw the prisoner lying stiff and motionless where he had placed him, as if the shock of such an unexpected recapture had killed him.

* * * * *

"This is what comes of wanting a German for a son-in-law!" said the good mother at Raskow, in a high-pitched voice to her husband. "I pray that he may not make us look foolish!"

Everything was arranged for the wedding, the guests had all arrived, and still the hero of the day had not put in an appearance.

"Perhaps he has missed the way," said old Petrovitch mildly. He himself was feeling a little alarmed, for in his negotiations with the father of Ulrich Gobatz he had been led away by his enthusiasm in speaking about Sonia's fortune, and now thought it just possible that the news of his misfortunes in the spring and the money he had lost might have come to the German's ears.

"We will go and meet him," he said, glad of an excuse for escaping from his wife's reproaches. "He may have missed his way at the cross-road."

He saddled his fat old pony, and half a dozen of the young men who had been invited to the ceremony, and were idling about the yard pretending to see to their horses to avoid having to make themselves agreeable to the women-folk, rode out with him along the high-road.

"Tell us what the bridegroom is like," said one, "and we will ride ahead and give him a welcome. Come—has he a beard?"

The old man however would give no description.

"It is I who ought to meet him first," he said, drawing himself up with a grotesque assumption of dignity.

"What—are you afraid of their knocking him on the head, so that they may have a chance of winning Sonia?" asked his cousin, who rode by the old man's side.

"Yes, yes!" said Petrovitch, smiling. Really Sonia had no suitors in Raskow. The young men there shared Ulrich Gobatz's taste, and Sonia, with her refinement and quiet dignity, awed them. Besides, they knew about the lost dowry.

"Let me push on, then!" said the cousin. "I will see that there is nothing wrong. What is Ulrich Gobatz like? Is he young or old?"

"He is five-and-twenty."

"Fair or dark?"

"Fair, I should say, if he is like his father."

"Why, man, have you never seen him?" asked the cousin; and old Petrovitch hesitated.

"Well, you see," he said, in a whisper, "Ulrich was away when I went over, and I only saw his father. But we arranged everything."

"But Sonia has seen him?"

"Yes; she went to Bomford to see her grandmother, and the young man took a fancy to her when he saw her at the fair."

"And does Sonia like him?"

"What does it matter? He is the richest young man in Bomford, and not so bad-looking either."

"How do you know if you have not seen him?"

"His mother told me."

"And so, as we ride, you are looking out for a handsome man?" the cousin said laughingly.

"Why do you laugh?" asked Sonia's father, beginning to lose his temper. "There are not travelers enough in these parts for me to make a mistake."

"And he will have all his friends with him," said the other, speaking seriously to soothe his angry relative.

Old Petrovitch however was far from being soothed.

"No, he won't have any friends, I told you. He has had a quarrel with the people of his village, and is coming alone."

"Here he is, then," said the cousin, as a two-horse drosky with only one occupant came into view on the white road.

The old man urged his fat pony to meet his future son-in-law.

"Welcome, Ulrich Gobatz!" he said. "We expected you earlier. The preparations for the wedding are all complete."

The man thus greeted seemed pale and nervous, and for some moments made no reply. Then he explained awkwardly that he had been delayed on the road.

"An escaped prisoner made an attack on me," he said. "It was as much as I could do to beat him off. I am afraid he has rendered me scarcely neat enough for a bridegroom."

The man's face was covered with dust and perspiration; his clothes seemed disarranged, too, and his hair was as tangled as if it had not been touched with a comb for a month.

"Yes—you must have had a tussle," said old Petrovitch sympathetically. "But matters can soon be remedied when we reach the house." He was relieved to find that his exaggeration of Sonia's dowry had had nothing to do with the delay, and the fact put him in a good humor.

The party started back for Raskow.

"This is the house!" said the old man, turning to the bridegroom as the one street of Raskow came in sight; and the young man started.

"Are we in Germany, then?" he asked.

The men stared at him in surprise.

"Of course not; you passed the frontier six versts back at the guard-house!"

The troubled look in the bridegroom's eyes deepened, and he stammered out some explanation or his incomprehensible question. The next moment they were in the yard, and old Petrovitch was escorting his future son-in-law into the house. On the threshold they were met by the bride's mother, who was dragging her daughter unwillingly forward.

Sonia's eyes were red as if from recent weeping. There was naught of a bride's happiness in her face. She came forward sadly and with downcast eyes.

As the bridegroom stood before her, she raised them and gave a slight exclamation of surprise. But a quick look of desperate pleading from him made her silent.

"Your slave, Sonia," he said simply; and she extended her hand, saying:

"Welcome, bridegroom!"—and already there was an accession of animation in her face and movements.

* * * * *

When the drunken German looked back and saw that his prisoner, whom he had left bound in the road, was apparently dead or dying, he was considerably alarmed, as Stepan Karowski, the prisoner, hoped he would be.

There was no knowing who or how valuable a political prisoner might be in Russia, and, although the police would be ready enough to pay for his capture, they were just as likely to give the captor the knout, or worse, for causing his death. While he was on Russian territory he must not give them the slightest excuse for keeping him there.

Thinking all this over, Ulrich Gobatz went back and turned the man over. There was no sign of life in him, or very little; and the German turned pale as he untied the cords and tore up the paper he had pinned on the prisoner's back.

Then, as the Russian gave no sign of reviving, he carried him out of the glare of the sun and threw him down at the side of the road under the shade of the bushes.

"There," said he—"I'll just tie you up and put no paper on you! Then, if you come round, I can get the money, and, if you don't, I have nothing to do with it."

As he spoke he stooped to pick up the cord. It was the opportunity Stepan Karowski had waited for. In an instant the drunken German found himself with his face on the ground, and the next moment a blow on the back of the head rendered him insensible.

When he recovered consciousness, he found himself bound securely with his own cords and with nothing on but his shirt; neither his late prisoner nor his drosky was anywhere to be seen.

On realizing this, he began to whimper and to anathematise the Russian fugitive, who meanwhile, having, with the aid of a hammer he found in the drosky, removed the chains from his wrists and the ring from his ankles, was driving away in Ulrich Gobatz's clothes and Ulrich Gobatz's vehicle, with Ulrich Gobatz's passport in his pocket, making all the haste he could in what he thought was the direction of the frontier guard-house. It did not occur to him that the German had been taking him away from it instead of towards it.

He had not gone far when he was met by old Petrovitch and his party, and hailed as Ulrich Gobatz. Discovering at once that none of the party knew the bridegroom, Stepan deemed it best not to undeceive them.

If he declared that he was not the man they were expecting, and allowed them to proceed, ten minutes' ride along the road would bring them to the real bridegroom, and then they would surely return in pursuit of his assailant; but, if he kept on with the party, later on he could reach the frontier, and, once across that, he could do what he liked.

So Stepan Karowski allowed the wedding party to turn back with him, and talked to old Petrovitch as if he were indeed his son-in-law elect.

When they arrived at the village, he entered the house where the wedding ceremony was to take place, unable to think of any plan for acting differently.

Would any one recognize him? he wondered. Could he appeal to their generosity not to divulge his identity until some chance of escape presented itself? His eyes expressed all his passionate desire for freedom. And it was that expression that stopped the exclamation of the bride—the one person who knew that he was not Ulrich Gobatz.

It was plain to her that the man was begging her to keep secret the fact that he was unknown to her, and, with a woman's quick sympathy, she answered the appeal.

Her silence did not surprise Stepan Karowski. He was in a state of semi-stupor now. For three days and three nights he had had no sleep nor tasted food, every nerve stretched to its utmost tension; and the final struggle with Ulrich Gobatz and subsequent events had reduced him to a state of utter mental exhaustion.

When the priest came and the marriage service began, they pushed him forward, making some blunt jest about his bashfulness, to where Sonia was standing with downcast eyes before the merry-looking old priest.

He answered every question as they told him to do, knelt, rose, took the bride's hand—did everything as they directed him.

"Tell me—are you one of us?"

It was the bride speaking to him, and it roused him a little. The wedding was over, and they were bringing in benches

for the feast. He was sitting, with Sonia beside him, at the end of the room, a little apart from the rest, who were all busy. Stepan looked up and saw the bride watching him with eager questioning eyes. He smiled sadly and shook his head.

"Madam, I am only a poor fugitive and your grateful servant," he said, with courteous deference in his low voice and in a refined manner. "I fear greatly that I have done you an injury;" and he told her simply and briefly of his danger and his encounter with Ulrich Gobatz.

"For the present I owe my life to you," he finished. "Be assured that it is a debt which I shall never forget as long as I live. That may not be long," he added, with a sad smile, looking towards the open doorway.

"At any moment Ulrich Gobatz may come back, and with him the police to arrest me. It is foolish of me to stay here now; but my strength seems all exhausted by what I have gone through."

Sonia listened with wide-open eyes and expressive face, uttering a little cry of indignation as he told of her intended husband's baseness, and expressing admiration for the speaker's courage and cleverness. Her eyes filled with tears as she thought of his unhappiness and danger.

"You must not be retaken," she whispered determinedly, as he finished. "Nobody here knows Ulrich Gobatz. If he comes, I will declare that he is a pretender. They must believe me. And, when it is dark and the guests have all gone, we will harness the horses quietly and go away to the frontier. I can show you the way—first along the road and then through the forest, so that we may not pass the guard-house. Ulrich may have been there and prepared the guard; and, besides, I have no passport."

"But, madam," said the Russian gently, "I cannot permit you to encounter such danger for my sake. I must do my best to gain the frontier; and tomorrow the true bridegroom will come, and you will be happy in the marriage which I have been so unfortunate as to interrupt."

A glance at the girl's face startled him

"What is it? Lady, what have I said?" he asked, in an undertone, bending over her.

Sonia had half risen, and was staring at him now with a strange expression on her white face.

"What is it?" he inquired; and the girl's lips moved. He had to bend over her to hear the words that came from them.

"You are going to leave me—for them to kill me?"

Then suddenly he realized what he had done. It was no mere interruption of the marriage he had caused; he had rendered it impossible. And he had thought of leaving her to answer alone for it! His own baseness horrified him.

Sonia began to talk again in a low tone, her voice broken at times by restraining sobs.

"Listen!" she said. "When my father said I must marry Ulrich Gobatz, I told him I could not; but my father said he would kill me, and I dared not disobey him. But all day and all night I prayed Heaven to save me from wedding him. When the day came and my mother told me the bridegroom was come, I gave up all hope."

"And, instead of the bridegroom, you saw me," said Stepan gently.

"Yes: and I thought Heaven had answered my prayer. And my only fear was that you would turn into an angel and fly back to heaven. And now you will leave me worse, far worse, than I was before!"

She could not restrain her sobs now: and her mother, stealing behind her, whispered to her to keep up her heart and be sensible.

Stepan Karowski waited until the old woman had gone away and they were alone again, then he said earnestly:

"Sonia, I am but a poor fugitive—at any moment I may be a prisoner—but, if you will condescend to join me in my flight, I give you my word as an honest man who has done no one ill to take greater care of you and your happiness than Ulrich Gobatz would!"

Sonia looked up, smiling through her tears.

"You will find you need me to get away," she said. "I am quick at acting; leave everything to me."

The next moment they were called to the feast; and Stepan Karowski sat down at the table by Sonia's side, with a strange feeling of exhilaration and relief which he could not explain.

The bride and bridegroom had little opportunity of speaking together alone again, but late in the evening Stepan succeeded in drawing the girl aside.

"Can we not hasten our departure?" he said quickly. "Fate has been good to us, but the German must come soon."

Sonia shook her head.

"Who will find him so far away on the road?" she said. "We cannot leave yet. Even if they would allow us, their suspicions would be aroused, and then, at Ulrich Gobatz's first word, every one would be after us. Still more—think—if he has been set free and is coming to denounce you, we should be met on the road by his party. If that is not the case, why should we set everybody wondering?"

"But surely they will expect us to set out for home before long?" protested Stepan.

Sonia blushed, and was silent.

The bridegroom begged for an explanation. It was only, she told him, that they were not expected to return to Bomdori until the next day. It was so far away that a room had been prepared for them in the house, and they were to set out for Ulrich Gobatz's home early the next morning.

"We cannot do that," said Karowski quickly; "the delay would be fatal! I must speak to your father at once."

Old Petrovitch was passing, and the young man called him.

"What—leave us to-night?" exclaimed the old man, holding up his hands in dismay. "Is not our hospitality good enough for you, then, Ulrich Gobatz? Rather than you should set out for Bomdort to-night, I would hamstring both your horses and make a bonfire of your drosky!"

Karowski stood irresolute. Sonia, with her eyes, was begging him not to rouse the old man's suspicion by pressing his point further.

"Come—have one more dance," said the old man; and, before he knew what to say or do, Stepan found himself stumbling through the "bear dance" with Sonia as partner.

The wild jig was over at last, and everybody crowded round, embracing the newly-married pair, and bidding them "good night." Then old Petrovitch led the way up the rough wooden stairs to the bridal chamber.

When he had left them, Stepan turned quickly to Sonia.

"Let us escape now through the window, harness the horses and get away!" he said excitedly.

Sonia shook her head, and led him to the window. Looking through a hole in one of the little mica panes, he saw in the clear moonlight at least a dozen men out in the yard enjoying the cool air after the heat of the dance.

"We must wait," whispered Sonia. She sat down on the oaken chair at the side of the bed. "You must let me guide you," she said earnestly, "or we shall be lost. We cannot stir for hours yet."

"You are right. I am your slave, and will follow your guidance," replied Stepan courteously.

With quick decision he stretched himself at full length on the floor, and wrapped Ulrich Gobatz's great-coat tightly round him.

"I will seize the opportunity to sleep, madam," he said, "if it does not displease you. It is three days now since I slept. In five minutes I shall be as unconscious as the dead. May I leave you to watch over my safety?"

Sonia was willingly that he should lie on the hard floor, and, giving in at length reluctantly to his whim, insisted on placing a pillow under his head. He kissed her hand reverently when she had done it.

"Good night, my guardian angel!"

* * * * * *

"Wake, wake, Karowski! Ulrich Gobatz has come!"

Stepan started up wide-awake. The room was in darkness, but the moonlight showed him Sonia bending over him.

"It is Ulrich Gobatz. I heard him drive up," she said; "and I fear the police are with him."

"Fasten the door!"

"It is bolted."

"What shall we do?"

"It depends. See—everybody is in the house and listening!" As she spoke she took him to the window and pointed to the yard, which was quite deserted. "You can break open the window easily, and get down by the roof of the wood house. If they have left nobody outside, we can escape in their drosky; it is standing in the road. Quick! Help me to force the frame of the window! Hush! It must be done silently! Sh——"

There was a knock at the door, and old Petrovitch's voice was heard, sounding very huskily.

"Sonia, my girl, come out and talk to these idiots. They say you have not married Ulrich Gobatz, after all. Where is he?"

The girl made no answer, but she drew Stepan to her.

"You can creep through the window now," she said. "Get down quietly while I keep them talking. If the drosky is empty, wait; if there is anybody there, come back instantly. In two minutes, if you have not returned, I will be with you. We shall have a good start, for they will have to harness other horses if we take their drosky."

The next moment she was answering her father in a sleepy tone, and chiding him for waking her, while Stepan Karowski made his way stealthily out of the window and down the woodhouse roof.

Nobody noticed him. All the guests were inside, pressing as closely as they could to the new arrivals and trying to understand their story.

The drosky in which the new-comers had driven up was in the road unattended, as Sonia had hoped. Stepan Karowski stood beside it impatiently.

How easy it would be for him to leap in, seize the reins, and dash away into the night, getting a splendid start of all pursuers. But, rather than leave Sonia alone to her fate, Stepan Karowski was willing to be recaptured and end his days in the mines.

It seemed hours before she came, stealing down the roof as he had done. She stumbled and made a noise as she reached the ground.

"It is all over!" muttered Stepan, in agony.

But nobody appeared; and the next moment they were in the vehicle together, and Sonia took the reins.

"I know the road," she whispered and urged the horses forward. Then as their bells began to sound, she lashed them with the whip to make them gallop.

The next moment they were flying along the dark street; and Stepan Karowski, looking back, saw that already the guests were streaming outside and that their flight was discovered.

"We are seen?" he whispered excitedly; but Sonia did not answer.

She sat, reins in one hand and whip in the other, staring straight before her along the road, apparently unconscious of everything but the horses. Presently the road widened a little and lay straight and white in the moonlight. Then she spoke for the first time.

"We have a good start," she said; "but we shall have to race for it soon."

She never turned her head, but Karowski kept a sharp look-out.

There was a quarter of an hour's silence, while the trees of the forest seemed to fly by them.

"In another half hour we shall be safe," said Sonia. "Are they in sight?"

Her companion strained her eyes, gazing into the dim distance.

"I can see nothing."

"Listen!"

There was another spell of silence, and then Stepan, who had been listening attentively, turned to the girl.

"I can hear them!"

"Horses or bells?" she said.

"Horses," he answered.

"We shall be overtaken; they are gaining upon us rapidly!" cried Stepan; and Sonia, hearing him, laid down her whip.

"You intend to give in?" cried Stepan, aghast.

But the girl was already climbing out of the drosky.

"Quick—into the wood!" she cried; and Stepan, following her example, sprang out into the road.

She called once more to the horse, urging them forward in a fresh effort with the lightened drosky; and then, taking Stepan's hand, she pulled him, half dazed, into the thick brushwood at the side of the road.

"In a few moments they will discover that they have passed us and will return," she whispered, when they reached it. "We must get as far away as we can. If we keep the moon always on our right, we are certain before long to come to the German side."

Almost as she spoke, the noise of returning wheels sounded on the road, and Sonia ceased from talking to seize her companion's arm and push her way farther into the forest.

* * * * * *

The good people who inhabited the little village of Ziers, which nestles close down to the edge of the Lake of Geneva, not far from Geneva itself, were considerably exercised in their minds concerning the lady who had come to stay in the tiny chalet at the top of the hill. The chalet belonged to a Russian gentleman, Monsieur Karowski, who, after a somewhat protracted visit to his native country, had returned with a lady who was always sad called Madame Karowski, who was very pretty and very good, all the villagers declared.

Stepan Karowski spent as much time as before over his studies and work on behalf of his oppressed countrymen; but it no longer filled his heart to the exclusion of other thoughts and feelings. He had to care for another now. And he was always dissatisfied.

It was just a month from the day of their strange marriage at Raskow, and he had tried by every delicate attention in his power to manifest his gratitude to the girl and to reconcile her to the loss of her home.

He found her in the pretty boudoir which he had had fitted up for her, engaged over a French lesson with her professor. He apologized to Monsieur Delaporte, and took Sonia out for a walk along the shady path by the lake and through the corn fields. She walked by his side in silence.

When they reached the lake, Stepan began to speak of what was causing him so much anxiety.

"Sonia," he said sadly, "I am afraid I have ruined your life. I have made up my mind to atone as far as I can. I must send you back to Raskow.

"You have given me your life. I do not care now to hold it when to do so will spoil all your existence. You shall return to Raskow with all that I possess and the bar removed."

"How?" "I will cease to exist."

"You will kill yourself?" "Yes. It is all I can do to atone,

It was growing chilly. Stepan led the way into his study.

"I want to bid you 'Good-bye,' Sonia," he said. "I am going away early tomorrow to Paris. Theodore will make all the arrangements for your return, and will accompany you. I may not see you again."

There was but little light in the study, and Karowski did not ring for a lamp. He took the girl's cold hand in his, and began to talk again of his gratitude, of what her good-heartedness had done for him.

"Sonia," he said, suddenly changing his tone, "may I tell you something? I had meant not to tell it to you, but it cannot do any harm, and I would rather say it. Do you know why I care so much that you are sad, why I am sending you home?"

"Yes—you find me a burden. What am I but a burden to you?" Sonia's voice shook now, though she struggled hard to control it.

"A burden? Oh, Sonia, do you not know that it is because I love you, because I care for nothing in the whole world but your happiness? And day by day I have seen you grow sad and homesick. Good-bye, little one! It makes me happier to have told you. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!"

"Will you give me one kiss—wife?" It was the first time he had used such words.

He bent down and touched her cheek with his lips. Sonia burst into a great fit of sobbing, threw her arms around his neck, and clung to him, crying:

"No, no, no—not 'Good-bye!'"

Stepan Karowski's heart beat wildly.

"Do you love me, then, wife?"

* * * * * *

Stepan and Sonia were married again at Geneva; and now the good people of Ziers are no longer at a loss as to the relations of Monsieur and Madame Karowski.

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Of Wise Indifference

In the dedication of a book of poems, the late English poet laureate, Tennyson, spoke with respect to earthly things of attaining "the wise indifference of the wise." Alas, then! and is indifference to be our prime wisdom? —and are we, the nearer we approach the stolid brain of the Caffre or the unresisting coldness of the Indian, to be counted wise? We have around us the immeasurable world; we walk in the presence of infinities; we have thoughts that touch upon the verge of doom, and are accompanied by a presence which is not to be put by. Simply, we, and all who read this, are human. Are we to consider that wise indifference is to be the lesson which life teaches us—that after many struggles, battles, and bleedings, we are to be as stolid as an ape and as contemplative as a Hindoo?—to feel nothing, say nothing, resent nothing, resist nothing, praise nothing, blame nothing, love nothing, and hate nothing? That, we take it, is "the wise indifference of the wise."

But is indifference wisdom? If so, dumbness is better than eloquence; speech is silver only, and silence is golden. We think these are strange doctrines; they are grand ones to some; but of old we were taught that action is better than rest, and that eloquence is finer than a dumb silence. Nowadays we have learnt to doubt and to distrust ourselves. We have lost a great deal of our noble faith, and have gained a cowardly and mean experience, which makes us tacitly put up with and acquiesce in wrong, and worship success only.

This worship of material prosperity has arisen on the decay of our faith in that which is good, great, and noble. We find in the world (thanks to ignorant lawmakers and interpreters) such a jumble of right and wrong, good and evil, justice and injustice, that we worship whatever is uppermost.

The futility of our laws, the frequent errors of justice and right as regards prosperity, the general even success of the man who has the least right upon his side, has led not only to our worship of success, but also to the idea that indifference is wisdom. Of what use is it to rejoice and be glad when the true man has to mourn, and the bad man gets the better of him? Of what use is it to indulge in laughter or tears? It is better, says the laureate, to "attain the wise indifference of the wise."

Laughter and tears, however, are of some use in our human economy, and, be we as indifferent as we can, will have their day. The faculty of laughing is one proof of our superiority over the brute creation. The laugh of man is a kingly laugh; and, in the symbolism of the ancient mythology, Jupiter himself laughed loud and long at the follies of men or the misfortunes of the gods. To laugh was therefore jovial. It betokens ease and power, as well as an internal merriment, which is not all wrong. We would much rather deal with a man who can, and does laugh, than with one who shuts up his mouth like a steel trap, and never dares to open it, or even to wrinkle his lips in a smile.

A great deal of nonsense has been written about laughter. We hear that it is vulgar to laugh, and that a man has a horse-laugh, and a coarse laugh; that one man laughs "like the head of an old Scottish fiddle," and that another "sniggers like a penny whistle." The same degree of cloudy uncertainty prevails about the source of laughter. Some one has said that laughter is an affection caused by the rebound of a strained imagination, when it is led to expect something, and finds nothing. Dr. Johnson thought that laughter was caused by a sudden sense of superiority in the laugher over the laughed at. But neither of these definitions will account for all our joyous and funny laughs. We have seen a mother and her girls, or two sisters, home from school, look at each other, and laugh for pure joy. Not that there was anything to laugh at; there was the innocent fun of it. They laughed because they were happy, as most of us do.

Why an indulgence in laughter should be considered vulgar, it is not very easy to see. It may be no doubt foolish to laugh perpetually, as Dryden says that "the loud laugh bespeaks the vacant mind;" but some vacant minds are better than plotting guilty ones, and a man may be a stupid, unknowing man, yet a merry one, and innocent and true. The truth seems to be, that pride is the great enemy of innocent mirth. All emotion is a leveler, and the prince and the dustman, who are laughing at the same joke, or enjoying the same innocent bit of fun, are on an equality, which does both of them good.

Many persons who will show a proud indifference to joy and merriment will not do so with regard to tears. This is especially the case with women who, with the unreasoning usual to the sex, have declared that is graceful and beautiful to weep, but ungraceful and even ridiculous to laugh. We find plenty of Madonnas and Niobes, who weep like fountains; but we hardly meet with the laughing heroine. It is fashionable with the sex to be sad and sentimental; but it is vulgar and boydenish to be too merry, to laugh freely, and to express cheerful sentiments.

Tears are, moreover, women's weapons, while they are man's abhorrence. Scarcely any man likes to see a woman cry. It is the light cares that cry, and howl, and blubber; it is the babe who rains down tears like an April day, but who, while they are yet standing on his cheek, like fresh dewdrops on a pretty rose, will raise his lungs and crow again with laughter. It is the careless, silly girl who will flood over with a sudden summer storm of crying; but it is the man's heart, wearied, desolate, and worn, that is dry as a desert well, and refuses to its owner the consolation of a tear.

Tears are very soothing, very pleasant. Perhaps in a woman's life there is no moment so pleasant, no half-hour, let us say, so charming, as that halcyon and peaceful interval which results after "a good cry." It is so pleasant to fancy one's self a martyr, to pity one's self, to say, "Ah, poor me! Well, well, some day some one will miss me, no doubt," and so on, and then to cry over "poor me!" Even stout Jack Falstaff, a man more given to laughter than to tears, to jollity than to sorrow, is caught now and then pitying himself. "Well, go thy ways, fat Jack," he says. "There is but one honest man left, and he grows old apace." How much this passion for crying has been indulged in by ladies, our old writers will tell us. Almost every one of them accuses woman of being able to cry to order, and of making a market of her tears. No doubt some have done so; and no doubt, in the arts of deceivers like Delilah, to blush at will, to cry, to look hurt, astonished, and innocent, are arts of easy attainment.

That man, or woman either, who cries upon every occasion, is little more or less than a coward, is quite true. That one who grins continually with the face of an idiot may be an inconsiderate fool, is also true. But then there is a material difference between sound and reasonable employment of our faculties, and their abuse. The two exhibitions of emotion, laughter and tears, were given us for some use; and a man who can enjoy both extremes is the better man. Why should we think of an animated piano, which bragged that it could only play upon the middle notes, and that it was incapable of sounding the treble and the bass! It might play very quiet, even tunes; it might be said to have attained a "wise indifference," but it would be rejected by every true lover of music, as an exceedingly imperfect instrument.

If any one imagines that his own personality can be developed apart from that of others, he makes a fatal error. In savage tribes there is much uniformity and monotony. No one has much to give or much to take; therefore life is on a low plane and progress is slow. But, as civilization increases, differences become more marked, special talents develop, special tastes arise and are gratified, special thoughts and ideas find a bracing atmosphere in which to live. The thing to notice is that, as these differences multiply, so both personality and social well-being are enhanced. Instead of variations drawing men asunder, the bonds which unite them are the more closely drawn.

Do instantly whatever is to be done; take the hours of reflection or recreation after business, and never before it. When a regiment is under march, the rear is often thrown into confusion, because the front does not move steadily and without interruption. It is the same thing with business. If that which is first in hand is not instantly, steadily, and regularly despatched, other things accumulate behind, till affairs begin to press all at once, and no human brain can stand the confusion.

There is a large and fertile space in every life, in which might be planted the oaks and fruit trees of enlightened principle and virtuous habits, which, growing up, would yield to its old age an enjoyment, a glory, and a shade.

A censorious man is a most disagreeable companion. Nobody likes the society of a man who, like doomsday, calls to mind all the faults of the whole human race.

It is only the useless, aimless, repining life which is an ignoble one; a life of occupation and labor is generally one of enjoyment also.

If there is one real failure possible in life, it is the failure to be true to the best one knows.

Pride is never so effectually put to the blush as when it finds itself contrasted with an easy but dignified humility.

Correspondence.

Dilemma.—Gentlemen are not usually attracted by a wild and boisterous manner; if you really wish to charm, we should suggest quite a different course of conduct to that which you propose. It is quite possible to be entertaining in a ladylike manner, and it is certainly far more effective.

Edda.—"Brown study" is a corruption of brow study; brow being derived from the old German "braun," in its compound form "aug-braun," an eyebrow. Webster defines it as a state of mental abstraction, serious reverie, or thoughtful absent-mindedness. Washington Irving says: "My companion approached and startled him from his fit of 'brown study.'"

E. S. H.—Sultana raisins are made from a kind of grape which has no seeds. They are brought from Smyrna in Asia Minor. They are sometimes called Smyrna grapes. Myrrh is brought chiefly from Arabia and Abyssinia. It is the hardened juice of several kinds of shrubs or small trees which grow in those countries. It is at first light yellow, but when dry, reddish brown.

T. S. Y.—Many explanations are given of the origin of the superstitions connected with the number thirteen. One is, that as at the last Supper of our Lord, thirteen sat down, and as the first to rise was the traitor Judas, so it was ever afterwards thought ominous to be the first to leave a party of that number, and as someone must be first to leave, the number was of course avoided. It is probable, however, that the superstition is older than Christianity.

Clio.—Alexandrines are rhyming verses, each consisting of six measures or twelve syllables. The only complete poem in English in them is Drayton's "Polyolbion." The last line of the Spenserian stanza is an Alexandrine. The name is supposed to be derived from an old French poem of the twelfth century on Alexander the Great. Others consider that the name was given from the fact that one of the authors of that poem was named Alexander.

Daisy.—An engaged girl should not indulge in flirtations, though it does not follow that she is to cut herself off from all associations with the other sex because she has chosen her future husband. She may still have friends and acquaintances; she may still receive visits and calls, but she should always endeavor to conduct herself in such a manner as to give no offence. It is a decided breach of good faith and etiquette for an engaged woman to correspond with a gentleman friend, and she can hardly expect her plighted husband to be satisfied or pleased with such coquettish conduct.

W. V. M.—The dyes in use come chiefly from plants. Sometimes the roots furnish the coloring matter, as do the stems, barks, flowers, and seeds. A few dyes, such as cochineal and lac, come from animals, and many substances used in dyeing are obtained from the metals and other minerals. From the coal-tar of gas-works beautiful colors are made. They are generally called aniline colors. Among them are the solferino, magenta, roseine, mauve, aniline, emeraldine, blue de Paris, and Bismarck. Among the most important vegetable dyes are Brazil wood, logwood, madder, saffron, fustic, annotto, tumeric, indigo, sumac, alder, and red sandal, or sandalwood.

Rose.—The Witch of Endor is described as having a familiar spirit; but whether she was a pretender or not does not matter, for she was in this case used as an instrument in the hands of God; the appearance of Samuel being a genuine one, who uttered a genuine prediction, and was sent to rebuke Saul. The woman appears to have been both startled and alarmed, so perhaps by means of her "familiar spirit" she had intended to raise someone who looked like Samuel, and she was amazed when the real Samuel came. We must believe in the existence of witches under the Mosaic dispensation, for no sin is more severely rebuked by the sacred writers. You will find the same in the Gospels.

Torpid.—The effect of concentrated liquor ammonia, possessing its full strength, would be to raise severe blisters in a few seconds, and the smell is so pungent and overpowering that it is not likely that anyone would venture to put it intentionally on the hair. Even the liquor ammonia of the Pharmacopeia sold by the druggists is too strong to use, undiluted with water, on the head, unless it has been weakened by keeping or exposure. Ammonia acts like any other alkali; it cleanses the scalp, removes all grease, but is too irritating, and sometimes increases, instead of lessening, the amount of dandruff in the hair. Borax from its antiseptic properties is better in most cases.

E. A. A.—You can only bide your time until he makes up his mind to propose marriage. There is no way in which a man can be forced to declare his affection. The majority of women are adepts in the art of pleasing, and by their winning ways can easily captivate one who by word or deed signifies his preference. One thing should be remembered, however, and that is, no woman should, metaphorically speaking, throw herself at the head of the one upon whom she has centred her love, as he will, in all probability, object to such a summary method of capturing his heart, and assume a defensive attitude that is very likely to lead first to distrust, and finally result in a rupture of the intimate relations existing among lovers.

TO STAND ASIDE.

BY A. L. S.

Easy it were to give my life to thee,
Its days of toil and hope, its utmost wealth
The travel the wide earth, the pathless sea,
Tending thy want, thy sickness, and thy health.

Such were a Summer task, a soul's desire,
Though I were bared of all things for thy sake.
There is a sacrifice whose worth is higher
Than any gift supremest love can make.

To stand aside while others wait and tend thee—
To know thee ministered by other's care,
To watch while other loving hands defend thee—
To see the service which I cannot share—

To joy when alien kindness is availing—
To quence the jealous agony, the pain!—
O true heart's love, so patient yet so failing,
Such a high glory how canst thou attain?

Her Choice.

BY A. M. J.

"IT is most extraordinary, that is the third ornament that has been lost in the last fortnight; last Tuesday and the Tuesday before that, and now this Tuesday. I cannot understand it. It is most annoying, and I must say it seems to me to be very suspicious. You really ought to do something, Arnold."

"What can I do more, mother? I have put the affair into the hands of Mr. Spyer, the greatest detective of the age. We must wait for results."

"And meanwhile have the house stripped. Mr. Spyer, indeed! It seems to me that he just does nothing for all he looks so wise. It is most annoying, I repeat. I would rather have lost any other ornament than that diamond peacock. Your poor father gave it to me on the day he led me to the altar; nothing would have bought it from me, I prized it so much."

"I know, mother, how you prize it for the dead giver's sake. I assure you, you cannot be more annoyed than I am myself, and particularly that you should lose them while you are staying here."

"You do not suspect any of your servants of the theft?"

"Now, as you know, the servants have been with me for some time. I could almost vouch for their honesty as for my own. Nothing has ever disappeared till lately."

"Who could it be? For I am perfectly sure in my own mind that the things were stolen."

"Your own maid?"

"What! you do not mean to say, Arnold, that you think that Burdekin has anything to do with the thefts? Why, the idea is perfectly preposterous. She has been with me fifteen years or more; you might just as well say that I stole the things."

"I confess I feel puzzled, mother. The jewel case is in Burdekin's charge; she says she locked it in the safe as usual when the ornaments had been replaced in their cases. How then could the jewels disappear without her knowledge?"

"I do not know, but I am certain she is not the thief. If she were, why did she not take them before?"

"Perhaps some sudden pressure may have assailed her."

"Why do you make such a set upon poor Burdekin, Arnold. You seem to think she has done it."

"I do not wish to offend you, mother, and I am aware that Burdekin was an honest, faithful servant."

"Was, Arnold?"

"Yes, mother. Let me finish; I say 'was' designedly. I believe that some sudden pressure caused her to take the things."

"What makes you think that?"

"Well, you see, had it been an ordinary thief, it is not likely that only one ornament would have been taken at a time."

"Ah!"

"Burglars generally make a clean sweep of the lot.

"That is true."

"Consequently it must have been some one well acquainted with your jewel case and who had access to it who committed the robbery, some person in the house in fact."

"And you think Burdekin is that person?"

"I could not be absolutely certain without actual proof, but my suspicions point that way. Who else could it be? Who had the same opportunities?"

If not convinced, at all events Mrs. Darrah was silenced. There was truth in what Arnold said: Burdekin had opportunities of purloining that nobody else in the house had, but why had she not done it before?

In her fifteen years' service she had always been most exemplary until now; her mistress was loath to believe evil of her, and yet her son's words set her thinking. Burdekin had full charge of the jewels. How was it, if, as she said, she locked them safely away in a receptacle, that on three separate occasions now when the cases were opened there was a jewel missing, and each time a valuable one!

No trace could be found of these jewels, though rewards had been offered, and on the last occasion when the diamond peacock was missed, Arnold Darrah had put the matter in the hands of Mr. Spyer, the detective.

Mrs. Darrah was the widow of George Darrah, the senior partner in the firm of Darrah, Endon & Co., wholesale merchants. Arnold Darrah had taken his father's place in the firm on the latter's death, so that Mrs. Darrah and her daughter sustained no pecuniary loss when the husband and father died, Arnold proving himself quite as good a man of business as Mr. Darrah, Sr., and under his guidance the firm prospered exceedingly. Arnold was thirty and unmarried when he thus stepped into his father's shoes.

It was of his own free will that he remained unmarried to this age. Many mothers in society with marriageable daughters would gladly have welcomed the rich merchant's son as a husband for one of their daughters, but he steered clear of all the traps laid to catch him, and went on his way alone.

The fact was, he had never really been in love. He had fancied he was more than once, but he managed to discover his mistake and pull up just in time.

The merchant's only daughter, Jemima, or "Jimmy" as she was familiarly known to her friends, was five years younger than her brother, and bore a strong resemblance to him in feature. She was above the average height, slight, but muscular and wiry, and rather to her mother's horror, excelled in many manly pursuits.

Poor Mrs. Darrah was aghast when Jimmy first took it into her head to discard veils, gloves and feminine tripperies generally, and ape the manners of the sterner sex; she almost tearfully complained to Arnold, who laughed at the recital of his sister's delinquencies. "Never mind, mother," he said soothingly. "It is only a passing fad. Jimmy will come to her senses before long, when the novelty has worn off."

"She has cut all of her beautiful hair off."

"That is a pity; it is not irreparable, however, as it will grow again."

"She wears divided skirts and has ordered knickerbockers."

"Worse and worse," exclaimed Arnold, who could not refrain from laughing at his mother's doleful tones. "What next?"

"She smokes," in an awestruck voice. "Only fancy a woman smoking!"

"A good many of them do it now," Arnold said quietly; "it is no use trying to dissuade her from it at present. She will soon give it up when she finds how it discolors her teeth."

"I wish she would. Then she belongs to those horrid clubs. Why, at the Leviathan they want the total extinction of man."

"Don't they wish they may get it!" returned Arnold, laughing outright. "The total extinction of man means the total extinction of woman as well. You leave Jimmy alone, mother. When Mr. Right comes she will give up all these fads and fancies and settle down into a model wife and mother."

"I am sure I hope so." Mrs. Darrah said with a sigh. "Jimmy is rather a trial just now."

"There is no harm under all her eccentricity; it will find its level, mother, never fear."

But up to the present Jimmy seemed as much bent as ever upon pursuing her manly career.

It was some two years after his father's death that Arnold Darrah fell genuinely in love at last.

The girl he fell in love with was very unlike the women whom Jimmy admired and imitated.

Arnold Darrah could laugh indulgently at his sister's foibles, but her mannish friends found no favor in his sight. He would never dream of making a strong-minded woman his wife.

Enid Endon was the only child of his partner.

He had known her from a baby, and had petted her as such without once thinking of falling in love with her till he suddenly awakened to the fact that this girl held his heart in thrall; that she, and she only, was the one woman in the world for him.

What opened his eyes to the fact of his love was this: the families of Darrah and Endon were always friendly, and saw a good deal of each other. Arnold being fourteen years older than Enid, looked upon the latter as a child, and so she was in spite of her eighteen years. She was very fair and childish-looking, with wavy, golden hair, pink-and-white complexion and slight, fairy-like figure. She was pretty in what Jimmy declared to be a doll-like fashion, and Miss Darrah was not far wrong in this; Enid did resemble a wax doll in her fair prettiness.

In spite of her contempt, however, for Enid's delicate hands, tiny feet, and general shrinking from all manly pursuits, Jimmy in her own way, was fond of the pretty little creature. She was sorry that Arnold had not chosen some one with more backbone and who would stand up for the rights of her sex, but as his fancy had fallen on her, why, she would try to make the best of it and see if she could not inoculate Enid with some of her own ideas concerning the emancipation of women.

Miss Endon thought a great deal more of a new gown than of the wrongs woman endured at the hands of that monster man.

The fit of her dresses and the cut of her shoes interested her a great deal more than lecturing from a platform or denouncing the other sex. She could not be brought to see that women had any wrongs at all.

This is scarcely to be wondered at, seeing that she had been petted and spoiled almost from her birth, and every wish of hers was gratified by her fond parents if they could possibly do so.

On her eighteenth birthday a grand ball was given by Mr. and Mrs. Endon to celebrate her coming out. No expense was spared to make the festivity befitting the occasion.

Of course the Darrahs were invited. In deference to her mother's wish, Jimmy consented to put on a ball gown instead of the cutaway coat and divided skirt which formed the orthodox evening costume of the members of the Leviathan Club; but, to use her own expression, she felt "like a fish out of water" in it and longed for the time when she could doff it and resume her masculine attire.

Arnold Darrah was one of those who did not despise dancing; he was a good waltzer and really enjoyed it, especially when his partner was the heroine of the evening, fairy-like Enid Endon.

He had finished a dance with her and was preparing to sit out the interval, when his intention was frustrated by a gentleman coming up and claiming her for the next dance.

Arnold would have remonstrated, as the music had not yet struck up; but Enid hurriedly withdrawing her hand from his arm, placed it at once in that of the new-comer and walked away with him, leaving Darrah rather astonished and put out.

He looked attentively at the man who had so unceremoniously deprived him of his partner.

He was a man about the middle size, rather elegant in appearance, with a handsome, dark face and peculiarly piercing eyes.

He bent over the fair girl at his side with a lover-like air that sent an angry thrill through Arnold's veins.

"Who was the fellow, and what was he, that he dared appropriate Enid Endon in such cool fashion?" he thought disgustedly: "he had never seen him before and never wanted to again, confound his impudence."

This incident opened Darrah's eyes to the state of his own feelings.

He had fallen in love with Enid Endon without knowing it.

He felt unreasonably angry with this stranger, and found himself watching him and his partner intently, quite forgetting that there were other girls to whom he was engaged for some of the following dances.

He could do nothing but think of Enid and follow her about. He was chagrined to find that she sat out two or three dances with this man, who seemed to have appropriated her to the exclusion of her other partners.

Impatiently Darrah waited until the next dance Enid had promised him, when he went up to her and claimed her.

She was rising to take Arnold's arm when the stranger said blandly, "This next dance is mine, Miss Endon."

Enid hesitated, looking helplessly from one to the other, when Arnold said warmly, "This dance is mine, as Miss Endon's programme will show."

"I—I have lost it," faltered the girl.

"Miss Endon promised me this dance," the stranger said, "but if she wishes to dance with you, why," with a shrug of his shoulders, "I will waive my claim."

"Miss Endon," Arnold said, "this dance is mine, is it not?"

"I do not think it is," she said in hesitating fashion. "I—I promised it to Mr. Jeckell."

With a smile of triumph, the man she called Mr. Jeckell drew her arm through his own and went off with her, leaving Arnold nearly speechless with rage and amazement.

Miss Endon had certainly promised him the dance, but as she chose to prefer Jeckell, all he could do was to bow to her decision and swallow his disappointment as best he might.

But the incident had the effect of making him form the resolution that he would try and win Enid Endon for his wife, and that soon, ere others had the chance of plucking this fair flower.

* * * * *

It was some little time before Arnold found an opportunity of speaking to Enid of what filled his heart and mind to the exclusion of every other subject.

Somehow he never seemed to get an opportunity of speaking to her alone. Hypolite Jeckell was as her shadow: wherever she went he seemed to be there too.

Arnold could not find out much about him except that he had come with a letter of recommendation from one of Endon's oldest friends. He was half French, which accounted for his outlandish christian name, and seemed to have plenty of money. Beyond this Darrah discovered nothing.

Arnold grew to hate the sight of him hovering about Enid, with his glittering eyes fixed upon hers, and his voice subdued to tender whispers as he talked to her.

So matters went on for some weeks, and then one day Arnold was overjoyed to find Enid alone.

In answer to his inquiries, she said that Mr. Jeckell had suddenly been called away by telegram, but she did not know whether his absence would be long or short.

Arnold devoutly hoped it would be long; he did not take much time to improve the shining hour. In fact, so well did he press his suit that before long he was Enid's affianced husband.

The match was cordially approved by both families, and there being no obstacles in the way, the marriage was fixed for an early date.

Arnold was so happy that the thought of Jeckell scarcely ever obtruded itself but one day he did ask Enid what had made her give his dance to the Frenchman.

"But it was his; I had promised it to him," she said simply.

"You had promised it to me first," Arnold returned.

"Oh, no; you mistake, Arnold," she said seriously, and nothing he could say would convince her to the contrary.

"Do you like this man, darling?" Arnold asked presently.

"I hardly know," she answered. "When he is near I feel drawn to him, but——"

"Well, Enid."

"I feel a great relief when he is gone. I seem to breathe more freely, to be glad to be out of his presence."

"And one time, do you know, dearest, I feared that you might fall in love with him."

"Oh, no," she said almost involuntarily, and with a half-frightened air. "I should not like to have to fall in love with him."

"What an odd way of putting it, darling." Arnold said laughingly. "Do you think he could force you to fall in love with him? But," seeing a strange, apprehensive look on her face, "we will not talk of him any more, but of something pleasanter."

Arnold scarcely knew why, but he had an undefinable dread that Hypolite Jeckell might turn up and put some obstacle in the way of his marriage, so he hurried matters on, and there being no dissentients, one fine morning there was a grand wedding, and Enid became his wife with all the formalities of the law.

Spite of himself, Arnold Darrah felt a

weight lifted from his mind now that the knot was tied, and no one could take Enid from him. He took her away for a long honeymoon, which they spent abroad, perfectly content with themselves and the whole world.

It was during their absence that Jeckell returned. He seemed perfectly amazed when he heard of the wedding, and not over well pleased at it either. In fact, Jimmy declared that his eyes shot lightning and fury when he was first told of it, but as he uttered his congratulations to the respective parents in the most dulcet tones, this was put down to romance on Jimmy's part and the avowed dislike she had for Hypolite.

"He is a snake," she said after she had first been introduced to him, "a treacherous, crawling snake, that would leave his trail over any Eden. If I were a man he should not be admitted into my home-circle where I was master."

Jimmy's words were only laughed at, but it was strange that Jeckell always seemed to try and conciliate her, however contemptuous he might be towards other persons. But he received scant courtesy from Miss Darrah, who had a habit of saying disagreeable home-truths occasionally to those whom she disliked. After spending some happy months abroad Arnold brought his wife home to the beautiful place he had bought a little way in the country, for he rightly concluded that he would not ask his wife to share his mother's home.

Not that Mrs. Darrah, Sr. was by any means a typical mother-in-law; she was very fond of her pretty daughter-in-law, and secretly wished that Jimmy resembled her more in her dainty feminine ways, but Arnold knew that it was better for a wife to be mistress of her own household, and as Enid preferred the country, and his mother the town, both were satisfied with the arrangement.

The relations were very cordial between the two houses. Enid would stay with her mother-in-law on long visits, and the latter was welcome at Arnold's for as long as she wished.

Nothing could have exceeded Jeckell's manner when he first met the Arnold Darrahs after their marriage; it was perfect. He congratulated them both, and expressed his regret that he did not know of it in time, as he would certainly have made a point of being at the ceremony.

As it was, however, he hoped he was not too late to offer a present as a souvenir of the happy event, and he opened a case he carried and showed a magnificent serpent, the scales glittering with diamonds and emeralds.

"You will permit me, madam?" he said, advancing towards Enid, who shrank back with a half-appealing glance at her husband.

Arnold, however, did notice it, and Hypolite, with his steely eyes fixed on hers, clasped the glittering bauble round her slender wrist. "I hope you will wear it, madam, sometimes, in memory of the donor." The last words were spoken so low that they did not reach Arnold's ears.

Enid murmured a few words of thanks, which Arnold seconded.

He would rather that the fellow had kept his present to himself, but he could not make a scene over such an ordinary affair as an acquaintance giving her a present on the occasion of her marriage, so he had to murmur thanks which he did not feel.

"Humph! Wonder why he chose a thing like that?" said Jimmy in her downright fashion when the bracelet was shown to her; "it is pretty enough and costly enough I have no doubt, but it reminds me of him. It is too reptilian to please my fancy."

"I—I think so too. I wish he had not given it to me," said Enid, who was alone with her sister-in-law.

"Why did you not refuse it, then? You need not have taken it," said Jimmy.

"Oh, I could not do that."

"Why not?"

"I—I do not know."

"Enid," said Jimmy, looking at her earnestly, "I will return the bracelet; let me give it back to Mr. Jeckell."

No, no."

"What is your reason? You do not care to take presents from that man? Arnold will have one made for you if you wish it; let me give it back."

"I—I dare not, Jimmy."

"Dare not?"

"No. I feel he would be angry if I did, and might work us harm."

"What a silly you are, Enid! How could he work you harm? However, I suppose it is no use saying anything more to you; you must keep your uncanny ornament. If Arnold does not object, why should I?" with which philosophic expression Jimmy betook herself off to have a final cigarette before going to bed.

Enid was staying at her mother-in-law's when the bracelet was presented to her, but soon after that they all moved to Arnold's country house, and here a curious thing began. One after another the elder Mrs. Darrah's diamond ornaments disappeared in most mysterious fashion, without anyone having the least clue as to who could possibly be the thief.

Arnold indeed was strongly inclined to believe that the hitherto irreproachable Burdekin must have some hand in the matter, as she was the only person who had access to the jewels. But this belief was shaken when, in deference to Mr. Spyer's suggestion, Mrs. Darrah kept in her own possession the keys both of the jewel case and safe, yet the disappearance of the ornaments went on the same as before.

Arnold assisted his mother to look over the contents of the cases, and saw them safely locked away in their receptacles; yet when a few days afterwards they were examined a diamond cross was missing.

It was evident that it could not be Burdekin this time. The whole family were nonplused; it looked as though magic had something to do with it, for it appeared to be by no human agency that the jewels were spirited away.

Mr. Spyer had questioned the lady's maid very closely as to where she had kept the keys and as to their being any likelihood of any one being able to get at them, but she stoutly asserted that she had never let them out of her possession except to members of the family, Mrs. Darrah or her son and daughter, and the detective saw no reason to doubt her word.

Mr. Spyer did not like to own himself defeated by this mysterious thief, and mentally registered a vow that he would go to the bottom of the mystery. He requested Mrs. Darrah to send her remaining jewels to her bankers, but to leave the empty cases locked up in the safe, and not to mention even to any member of her family that she had done so.

The old lady was indignant at first. "Surely, Mr. Spyer," she said, "you do not mean to say that you suspect any member of my family?"

"My dear lady, I suspect no one at present," he replied suavely. "I may have a theory, but—you wish to stop the theft of your jewels. The way I suggest is the only way possible of doing that. Take them to-day; take them yourself into town to your bankers."

Mrs. Darrah was impressed by his manner. "It is so late," she objected feebly.

"But, dear madam, you can sleep at your own house," he returned.

"Very well. I suppose I must. I can call upon Arnold on my way to the bank."

"There can be no objection to your acquainting your son with the facts, but ask him not to mention it to any one else."

"I must take my maid with me."

"Of course, madam, but do not let her know that you carry the jewels."

Rather mystified, Mrs. Darrah obeyed. She could not understand the detective's object, and he would not enlighten her.

"Now the field is clear," the detective muttered to himself when Mrs. Darrah had departed; "and the telegram I sent will keep Mrs. Darrah in town till late. There will be plenty of time to verify my suspicions. It is a queer case, very."

As he was passing along the hall he encountered Miss Darrah. He paused for a moment; then suddenly saying, "I'll do it; she's not one of your hysteric sort; her head's screwed on all right," he went after Jimmy and requested her to give him a few moments' conversation.

"Certainly, Mr. Spyer," she answered readily. "Come in here to the library; we shall be safe from interruption there."

Mr. Spyer looked behind the curtains, and opened the door suddenly to see if any one was listening before he turned to the expectant Jimmy.

"You have something to tell me about the thief?" she said.

"Yes, Miss Darrah. I believe I have discovered that individual, but I shall be certain to-night."

"Who is it?"

"Miss Darrah, you must be prepared for a great surprise. I will tell you, for I want your assistance in verifying my suspicions."

"Yes, yes; but who is it?" impatiently.

"Unless I make a great mistake, the thief will be found in the person of your sister-in-law, Mrs. Arnold Darrah."

At this astounding announcement Jimmy got up from her chair and faced the detective with flaming eyes.

"Are you mad, Mr. Spyer, or have you been taking too much to drink?" she demanded haughtily.

"Neither, my dear young lady," he replied calmly. "I do not wonder at your astonishment. I could not bring myself to believe it at first, but now I do not think there is any doubt; anyway to-night will decide."

His quiet manner impressed Jimmy in spite of herself.

"Enid a thief! Impossible!" she cried.

The detective shrugged his shoulders.

"To-night will decide," he repeated.

"But why should she take them?" Jimmy went on desperately. "She has plenty of her own, and most of those will be hers one day, for I do not care for diamonds. I will not believe it. Arnold's wife a thief! The mere idea is too horrible to be entertained for an instant!"

"Miss Darrah," the detective said, "I told you because I should like your assistance. The jewels have disappeared every week on the same day. This is Tuesday; another would disappear to-night if I had not taken precautions to prevent it. Neither your mother nor your brother will be here this evening; I wished to have the coast clear. Now cast your mind back to the last three Tuesdays. Did you notice anything peculiar about Mrs. Arnold on those days?"

"No," said Jimmy at first. "Stay, though," she added. "I remember she seemed drowsy and stupid after dinner, and went to lie down. I am almost sure it was on the Tuesday when she did that."

"Just so; and she will do it again to-night. Now, Miss Darrah, I want you to tell me the moment she leaves the drawing-room. By the way, how long was she absent on those occasions?"

"About an hour and a half, I think; but once she did not return to the drawing-room at all."

"Well, I rely upon you to call me."

"Time will tell, Miss Darrah; till this evening, adieu. Of course, I need not impress upon you the necessity of keeping this an absolute secret from every one, more especially from your sister-in-law."

"I understand," Jimmy said coldly.

She did not, she would not believe this horrible thing, yet she remembered now how Enid had made excuses for leaving the drawing-room on each succeeding Tuesday. The servants would be all downstairs at that time, so there would be no one to interfere, and it would not be thought strange if the mistress of the house should be seen coming out of her mother-in-law's room. Poor Arnold! What a terrible thing for him if this horrible allegation should prove true! Altogether Jimmy did not feel very comfortable when Mr. Spyer had left her.

* * * * * *

"Hush! not a word, Miss Darrah; simply watch her movements."

It was the detective who spoke, and who laid a detaining hand upon Jimmy's wrist as she was about to rush after Enid to denounce her duplicity.

As Mr. Spyer had surmised she would, Mrs. Arnold Darrah had made some excuse to her sister-in-law after dinner, whereupon the latter summoned the detective.

Taking up their positions in the room where the diamond safe was, hidden behind some curtains, the strangely assorted pair waited.

Jimmy, indeed, did not half like the job, but she was so certain that Mr. Spyer must be wrong that, for her brother's sake and also for that of Enid herself she felt that this mystery must be cleared up.

They waited so long that she was beginning to think there was nothing in Mr. Spyer's suspicions, when she was horrified to see her sister-in-law glide into the room and go towards the safe, with the evident intention of opening it with the keys she held in her hand. It was then that Mr. Spyer restrained Jimmy from rushing forward.

Methodically Enid went about her work. She opened the safe with one key, and the jewel case with another, and then singled out one of the cases. She opened this; it was empty. She opened a second and third with the same results. Then her calmness seemed to desert her, a troubled look spread over her fair face, her breathing grew hurried, and she rapidly opened the remaining cases, only to find them all minus their contents.

"What shall I do?" she murmured in troubled accents. "They must be here; he said so; he said I was to take one every week till they had all gone. But now somebody has taken them. What shall I say? He will be so angry, and he is terrible in his anger. I must obey him."

"What is she talking about?" whispered Jimmy excitedly to the detective. "What does she mean? And how strange she looks."

"It is as I expected," answered Mr. Spyer. "Mrs. Arnold Darrah is not a free agent in what she is doing now. Come out into the room; she will not take any notice of us."

Wonderingly Jimmy obeyed. Mr. Spyer was quite right; Enid took not the slightest notice of them.

"What does it mean?" exclaimed Jimmy.

"It means that Mrs. Arnold Darrah is hypnotized. She is obeying suggestions of the person who hypnotized her. She has been put into a mesmeric sleep. When she awakens she will know nothing of what she has done. You look incredulous, Miss Darrah; but from the first I suspected something of the sort from the appearance of your sister-in-law's eyes. I had something to do with a remarkable case in France a little while ago. A man was murdered by a woman, but it was conclusively proved by the doctors the woman was under hypnotic suggestion at the time. The man who hypnotized her had ordered her to kill this man, his rival, on a certain day and at a certain hour, and she obeyed implicitly without knowing that she did so. We may be thankful, Miss Darrah, that in this instance the suggestion has been confined to robbery, and not to personal violence."

"You mean—"

"That, had the hypnotizer ordered it, your brother would have been murdered by his wife, yet she would have been perfectly innocent to all intents and purposes; she would have known nothing about it."

"How horrible! What an escape Arnold may have had!"

"If it is as I suspect the hypnotizer would not stick at even that to accomplish his revenge."

"You suspect somebody?"

"Yes, Miss Darrah. There is only one man who is jealous of your brother's happiness. He was in love with Miss Endon."

"Ah, Mr. Jeckell."

"Yes. I think he had been experimenting in France, but I never could get sufficient proof to denounce him."

"What are you going to do now?"

"Follow Mrs. Arnold. See, she is putting back the cases. Most probably he is waiting somewhere near to take the diamonds from her."

"A thief?"

"Not in the way you mean, Miss Darrah. The diamonds are nothing to him; but it gratifies his thirst for revenge to think that he can cause your brother's wife to become one. I daresay he meant one day to enlighten your brother as to his wife's thieving propensities, without, of course explaining the cause. Think what a revenge that would have been for him."

"You're a clever man, Mr. Spyer," Jimmy said admiringly.

The detective smiled. "I daresay you all thought I was wasting my time. But now, action, Miss Darrah. We will follow your sister-in-law, but be careful that you do not wake her; it might be dangerous. Mr. Jeckell will do that, or if he should scent danger and not appear, I think I could manage it myself. I experimented in France as well as Mr. Jeckell, and not without success."

Meanwhile Enid, still with that troubled look on her face, went down the stairs and passed through the conservatory on the way to the garden, the others following cautiously.

She went straight to an arbor, within which was a rustic seat, on which she immediately sank as if somewhat exhausted.

The detective and his companion hid

themselves in the shrubbery and waited, but no one came, though Enid seemed very restless and evidently expected someone.

After about half an hour the detective whispered to Miss Darrah, "He will not come now; he has taken fright, or something has detained him. I think, with your permission, I will address her."

He went up to Enid, who seemed to be in a drowsy state, and made some passes before her face. Her eyes gradually closed, and she seemed to sleep.

Raising her finger warningly to Miss Darrah, who was an interested spectator, he said to the patient: "Who told you to steal those diamonds?"

"No one," said Enid positively.

"Now that will not do. Somebody suggested it to you. I order you to tell me."

There seemed to be a struggle going on in Enid's mind; the two opposing influences were at work. "It will depend upon which is the stronger, muttered the detective, and he made some more passes before her face. "Speak!" he commanded, "Who suggested it to you?"

"Mr. Jeckell," at last said Enid slowly and unwillingly.

"I have triumphed," cried the detective exultingly. "Those visits to the Salpetriere have borne fruit. Now to try and counteract his baleful influence. You were wrong," he continued, taking Enid's hand in his own. "Hypolite Jeckell is a bad man; he would ruin your happiness if he could. I command you to have nothing more to do with him, sleeping or waking. Do you hear?"

"I hear."

"And will you obey?"

"I will obey."

"Now, Miss Darrah," Spyer said, turning to the wondering girl, "to show you that there is something in hypnotic suggestion will you suggest something that I shall ask your sister-in-law to do when she is awake to-morrow, a week hence, a month, or when you choose. If I order her now she will do it without knowing why she is impelled to do so."

Jimmy thought a moment; then she said: "Tell her to give me those two keys to-morrow at five minutes to twelve."

"Right!" answered the detective, and he gave the order. "By the way," he added, "how did you get those keys?"

"Mrs. Darrah sent me on so for some of her jewels, and I took the impression in wax and gave it to Mr. Jeckell. He told me to."

"That explains how the keys were got. Now," turning to the patient, go back to your room, and when you are awake come down to the drawing-room."

"I hear," responded Enid, and she rose and glided rather than walked back to the house, and ascended to her room.

"Now, Miss Darrah," the detective said, "we will wait her coming in the drawing-room. In about half an hour she will be down."

Punctually to the half hour Enid came down. She looked very pale, but the eyes had lost the curious expression which had struck Jimmy as being so strange. "Where have you been, Enid, all this time," she asked.

"In my room."

"The whole time?"

"Yes. Do you know, I have been asleep. I still feel very sleepy."

"What made you come down, then?"

"I do not know; some irresistible impulse came over me the moment I awoke. I felt I must come down to the drawing-room."

"Well, dear," Jimmy returned; "you look tired and sleepy now. Do you not think you ought to go to bed?"

"Yes, I am going. I only wanted to say good night."

The next day Jimmy had another proof of the detective's power. At five minutes to twelve Enid came into her room.

"Look, Jimmy," she said, holding the keys. "I have just found these keys in one of my drawers. They do not belong to me, and I do not know how they came there; I never saw them before."

"Give them to me, dear; I think they were lost some little time ago," Jimmy said as calmly as she could. Even her strong nerves were somewhat shaken by the occult power that could thus sway and dominate another's will.

"Oh, they are yours? But I wonder how they came to be in my drawer," Enid remarked in all sincerity.

"Accident, most probably. Do not think anything more about it, Enid; it is of no consequence," Miss Darrah answered soothingly.

Jimmy was rather in a perturbed state of mind. What ought she to do—acquaint Arnold with the facts, or let him remain in ignorance that his wife had innocently enacted the thief?

Duty seemed to point to the former, but she knew it would be a heavy blow to him, he adored his young wife so much.

At last she decided to consult the detective.

"I think I should not mention anything about it, Miss Darrah," he said; "it will only cause your brother much uneasiness and pain that he may be spared."

"But if this man should influence her again?"

"I do not think you need fear for that. For the present his influence is counteracted, and—I know enough to make him leave the country. Far away he will not be able to dominate her will. I gather from what you say you would rather that this matter was kept quiet, but of course, if you wish otherwise, he can be prosecuted, but a jury might be skeptical; hypnotism is not much believed in in England."

"Oh, no. The publicity would kill Enid. At all events, that must be avoided. I suppose it is best that this should remain a secret between us."

"I think you have decided well, Miss Darrah. I chose you as my confidante because I knew you were strong-minded, and of this rest assured: I shall never try my power again over your sister-in-law; in all probability I shall never see her again. At all events, my services will not be wanted again in regard to Mr. Hypolite Jeckell. I mean to pay him one more visit."

"Ah, you mean to——"

"To make him disgorge the plunder, Miss Darrah. Your mother must have her jewels again, though I think they must come back as mysteriously as they were abstracted; those keys you have will come in handy for replacing the missing ornaments. I must count upon your help for this. Afterwards you can destroy the keys or keep them under safe ward, as you will, only it would not be a bad plan to persuade your mother to have fresh locks put upon the jewel case and safe. Mr. Jeckell, having had the impression of the keys in wax, may have had more made. However, I do not think he will trouble any of your family again."

In deference to Jimmy's wish, one part of this programme was altered. About a month after Mr. Spyer had thrown up the case as hopeless the Darrahs, all except Jimmy of course, were one day astounded when a package arrived by registered post which on being opened proved to contain the missing diamond ornaments and a type-written letter to say that, seized by sudden remorse, the thief took that opportunity of restoring the jewels he had stolen, as he feared some innocent person might be accused of the theft.

This was more than a nine days' wonder, and every conjecture imaginable was hazarded except the real one.

Jimmy kept silence, but for many a long day after she watched her sister-in-law narrowly; but when months had passed, and Enid showed no trace of hypnotic seizure, she began to breathe more freely and feel that Mr. Spyer's word could be trusted.

Indeed, when Enid's first baby came she felt that all her fears were at rest. The little stranger occupied her time to the exclusion of everything else save the love she bore her husband, which seemed to increase as the years rolled on.

Jimmy, as she watched their happiness, felt that she had chosen rightly when she resolved to bury in silence the knowledge that had come to her through Mr. Spyer's agency.

Hypolite Jeckell disappeared without leaving one trace behind.

Mr. Spyer had done his work effectually.

Jimmy occasionally smiled to herself when her mother expressed the great contempt she felt for those utterly useless members of the community, detectives in general, and more especially Mr. Spyer in particular.

In base minds worth begets envy; in great souls, emulation.

THE SERPENT HUNT.

For many reasons in India it is desirable to lessen the snake population, although one of the most pressing is that menageries in various parts of the world are disposed to give good prices for them. Hence the extra willingness of the natives to hunt them.

Preparations are made by ascertaining from the natives a promising snake district, which is usually a tract of jungle with a thick bamboo or grass undergrowth. In such lands snakes are found by thousands, and, after a promising patch is discovered, a beginning is made by clearing or burning the undergrowth from a strip entirely encircling the snake farm; then a broad expanse of perhaps an acre is cleared on one side, and there is located the snake trap, a netting extended for 200 or 300 yards on each side of the cleared trace, its wings gradually contracting to lead the reptiles into a blind alley, from which there is no escape.

Several hundred natives are assembled and on a day when the wind is from the right quarter they surround the district selected, and at a given signal, set fire to the jungle.

After the fire has been fairly started the natives are called behind the netting, as there is no need of their services on the other sides, for every snake tenant of the brush flees in the same direction toward the fatal netting.

Behind it stand rows of men, armed with clubs and sticks, ready to give their snakeships a lively reception. As the fire approaches the netting the snakes come in crowds, by hundreds, sometimes by thousands.

At the wings the men are congregated, with their clubs, ready to kill those attempting to escape, and as the main body of the reptiles approaches the netting the wings are pushed forward toward each other, the stakes supporting the netting are driven firmly into the ground, and the snakes are inclosed. But snakes can climb almost as well as monkeys, and so the men at the wings are kept busy killing those that endeavor to escape over the ropes.

At the blind alley the netting extends above as well as on the sides, and the larger portion of the reptiles are finally concentrated within this inclosure. There the scene is one of lively animation, for the snakes are of all sizes, some of the venomous reptiles of India not being more than six or eight inches in length, and as their movements are fleet, the bare-footed beaters are kept dodging about in a manner at once grotesque and amusing, their anxiety to escape the small serpents that go through the netting like a flash being even greater than their eagerness to kill as many snakes as possible and thus receive a larger share of the government bounty. No snake is permitted to escape, and after all the smaller reptiles which can work their way through the meshes of the net have been killed, attention is turned to the larger which remain.

In various parts of the netting there are loops which can be untied and then re-fastened, and after the slaughter of the little snakes has been finished, the work of catching the most prominent specimens begins. The superintendent points to an anaconda that will bring a good price, and as the animal thrusts its head against the netting in fruitless efforts to escape, a stick with a wire loop at the end is introduced, the snake is lassoed immediately back of the head, the wire is tightened, and the future occupant of a menagerie cage, hissing and writhing, is dragged through and seized by a dozen natives at once.

Bundles of bamboo, cut into proper lengths have already been prepared, three or four men straighten the snake and lay him on a bamboo, sometimes placing three or four smaller splints around him, and then lashing him securely down with bamboo withes every inch of his length.

Generally the lashing is found to be sufficient, and only when the serpent is very large and powerful are the extra bamboos tied around him for fear he might break the stick to which he is fastened. This operation is not carried on without an immense amount of protest from the snake, which hisses in the most terrifying manner and wriggles wildly in an effort to escape. But hissing and wriggling are all in vain; the Hindoos lash him down, finishing the operation by forcing his upper jaw upon the lower and tying the two together to the stick in such a way that he cannot even hiss. After all the best specimens have been selected and tied, the remainder are killed, beheaded, and the heads sent to the nearest government station for the bounty, and the captives are loaded into carts for transportation to Bombay, where they are disposed of to European agents.

At Home and Abroad.

A man in Paris finds a profitable business in collecting bad debts by stopping at the debtor's with a wagon, around the top of which are these words: "This buggy only stops in front of the houses of those who refuse to pay their debts." Every body, and particularly business people, dread this man's buggy so much that they pay promptly.

A curious discovery had been made in the archives of the Spanish navy—the bills of payment of the crews who composed the caravels of Christopher Columbus. The sailors, according to their class, received from two to three dollars a month, including their food. The captains of the three large caravels had each 80 francs a month. As for Columbus himself, who had the title of Admiral, he was paid a little over three hundred dollars a year.

The dogs are, to the foreigner, the worst pest in Turkey. The streets of Constantinople are given up to the mangy, maimed, famished droves which insist upon occupying the best parts of the pavement and snarl at the feet of the passers by. There is a rule that no one shall kill these miserable creatures, but on the other hand, no one ever pets or cares for them. They are left to fight among themselves for their precarious existence, and as a consequence they are often lifeless, with their ears torn and their coats ragged. Their only good seems to lie in the fact that they are a useful supplement to the city's inefficient scavenging force.

The Japanese, unlike their Chinese neighbors, have a horror of opium smoking. In Japan it is a crime punishable by a heavy fine and a long imprisonment. It is a crime to sell opium or smoking apparatus, and the only places where the drug can be purchased, or where a person may smoke, are on the foreign reservations under the protection of a foreign flag. Physicians and druggists alone are permitted to buy and sell the drug, and they are required to take out licenses and pay heavy fees for the privilege. Any violation of this law is punishable by imprisonment with hard labor for a term not exceeding fifteen years, or a heavy fine.

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The Ladies' Home Journal

Philadelphia

Our Young Folks.

BEAUTY AND PEACE.

BY P. P.

IN the old, old days long ago, when the world was young, and men were only just beginning to pile stone upon stone and call their painful labor cities, a little brown nightingale lived quietly in a sloping wood. He lived quietly, but not alone.

Many of his kindred bore him company, and made the green boughs musical with their melodious notes.

At the foot of the tall forest in which the nightingale sang stretched a valley, fair and green, through which glided a river, calm and clear as the sunshine that glittered on its waters.

The clouds mirrored themselves on its surface, and the swallows dipped their joyous wings in its tiny waves; but nought else disturbed the deep silence of its solitary course.

The world was young, and the foot of wandering man had never yet left the print of a lonely step in the calm valley or in the trackless wood.

Unmolested the nightingales sang all the day, and at night, like other birds, they sought their rest.

They sang out of the deep love and happiness of their hearts, and not for applause.

And yet they well understood the perfect beauty of their music; and often when one thrilling voice rose with purer loveliness above his fellows, the rest would pause to listen, and then with a burst of song echo back their admiration.

But now strange unwonted shadows, that had never before fallen on the tall unworn grass, flitted here and there across the valley.

Many more followed, and stately forms stood in groups and talked eagerly.

The valley was full of men. Soon the axe resounded in the wood, and the earth was made to yield her treasures of marble, and buildings grew day by day, foot by foot.

The sounds of the hammer, the anvil, and the saw ceased not while light lasted; still, through all the din the nightingale sang on. No one heeded them. The clamor and the clang, the hissing forge, and the grating saw drowned their voices. Sadly they looked down upon the growing city, and said.

"We would fain cheer the hearts of these toiling men, but they will not pause from their work to listen."

"Let us have patience," said the brightest among the nightingales. "Let us sing on in hope. These men are busy. When they have finished their work, and dwell peaceably in the town they are making, they will linger in its quiet streets to listen to our music, and their hearts will be glad."

So the nightingales obeyed the voice of their brother, and sang on patiently, ever waiting, waiting till the toil should be over and the noise of the tools should cease.

And now the city is built. But none the less does the sweat pour from the brow, and the clang and the clamor rise into the troubled air.

"The day is filled with the sounds of labor, we no longer hear our own songs; let us depart," said the nightingales. "These sons of men will never turn away their eyes from beholding the works of their hands, or bend their ears to listen to aught save the noise of their own toil."

"Stay," said the kindly bird, "the city is young, and the wants of man are many. Wait a little while, yet a little while, and these will be satisfied, then our notes will reach them in their rest, and their hearts will be glad."

So the nightingales waited, and sang on patiently.

But now war sprang up among men; one part of the city rose against the other part; man fought with man, brother against brother, and cries of fury and groans of anguish mingled with the unheeded music of the woods.

The tools of peace were cast aside; but men grasped the noisier tools of war, and the clang and the clamor rose into the troubled air.

Peace once more. And the bells in one half of the city tolled for the dead, while in the other they rang out merrily for the victory.

"Still they do not listen," sighed the patient nightingales.

"Ah, leave them alone to bury their slain," said the kindly one, "and their saddened hearts shall turn to our music for solace." So the nightingales sang on.

But the living forgot the dead. And one amongst them found gold, and his fellows crowded around him and grasped their spades, laboring painfully in the hard ground.

And then once more the clang and the clamor rose into the troubled air.

Nevertheless among the sons of men there were one or two who listened in the wood, and thought the music there whispered of a better world. So they spoke of it to their brethren; but these answered, "I do not hear it;" or others said, "I have no time to listen;" or "I hear it, but what then? It is nothing."

"Let us inquire," said a wise one among them; "let us send some of our brothers into the woods to listen, and when they come back they shall tell us of the matter."

"This is no time," said the others, "for men to cast aside their toil and go into the woods to listen to idle music. But here is the cat, and the dog, the cock, the goose, and the pig; they have nothing to do, let them go, and when they return they shall interpret to us the message."

So they chose out the creatures to go. A cock, who thought well of himself; a pig, who was counted wise in his generation, because he was fatter than his fellows; a goose, who was reckoned a wit, because she hissed at everything; a drake, called the eloquent, for he quacked much, and people noticed not that he ever said the same thing; a dog, who was learned, for he bayed at the moon; a cat, who loved quiet, and would say whatever the rest said.

So these went into the woods to listen, and the nightingales heeded them not, but sang on as before; for they sing alike to the wise and to the unwise, to him that hath understanding, and to him that lacketh.

The summer air was filled with music, and it ceased not for the clamorous bark or odious cackle of the strange creatures who had come to listen.

When they returned to the city men were too busy to hearken much to them, but they appointed certain from among them to receive the report of the creatures.

Ah! it would be long to tell all the speeches they made, and how the men of the city were sorely puzzled, for each animal interpreted the nightingale in his own note.

"They are precisely this," said the dog, barking furiously.

"We can understand that," said all the other dogs, well pleased, "and we need not put ourselves out of the way to listen to this music, for we can make it ourselves."

"Exactly so, my friends," said the satisfied dog.

"Not so," exclaimed the cock, "the music is far more noble than the dog affirms it to be. It is entirely beyond his compass, but I can give you the true notes."

With this he crowed lustily; all the other cocks were delighted.

"That is it," they cried, "we have the true notes; we can all do that; we need not listen in the woods."

And next the pig rose up gravely. Now the cock was considered rather flighty and quarrelsome, and was therefore not so much heeded; but the pig being sedate and respectable, was greatly regarded and reverenced.

But having risen he seemed to have nothing to say, for he merely grunted and sat down again. Nevertheless, he looked so sleek and well-to-do that all his kin were satisfied, and cried out, "He's right, that's it exactly."

And many among the children of men were inclined to follow the pig, because he was grave and respectable, and had most of the fat things. Meanwhile the drake ran up and down among them all quacking loudly, and as it generally happens that most noise gains most friends, he had more partisans than the rest.

The goose hissed contemptuously at the whole matter. "For her part," she said, "she did not believe in any of it."

Now the cat had stood aloof in all the meekness of philosophy; but being called on to give his opinion, he decided there was truth in all that had been said.

"The song of the nightingale, my friends," he said, "partakes of the bark of the dog, the grunt of the pig, the crow of the cock, and the never-failing quack of my eloquent friend, the drake."

The goose still hissed, but being indiscriminate in his censure, she became a small minority, for the creatures liked to believe in their own notes; therefore the cat's speech, as a true speech of expediency, meant to soften all parties, found favor.

Meanwhile the few who had listened to the music with hearts attuned to its beauty, silently condemned those interpreters, and told each other in whispers, that none of these gross cries lived in the nightingale's song.

It would be long to tell the strife that rose among the creatures as each one set himself up as a teacher. It would be longer and sadder to tell how the sons of men followed them, and fought and died for a cock's crow, or a quack.

And in war, as in peace, in sickness and in death, amid the groans of a weary world, the work went on, and the clang and the clamor rose in the troubled air; and once more the nightingales communed together, and said, "Let us leave the haunts of man, and fly to some distant and quiet land, where the din of their lives shall never reach us."

But the pitiful one, who had often in the calm night brooded over the restless city, and marked the toil-worn sleepers, and the weary watchers, and amongst and with them the peaceful angel-faces of little children, loved the busy place, if only for their sakes, and pleaded yet again.

"Not so, brothers," said he; "let us not forsake the habitation of men because the toiling day gives them no time to listen to the music of our voices. At night, in sleep, their faces are turned towards heaven. Let us not despair, but respect their labor, and be silent while the light lingers; but when the soft and silent night breathes its calm upon the earth, let our song fill the darkness with melody, and sink deep into their hearts."

And now, when the clang and the clamor have ceased, and the troubled air is still, music breathes from the woods, and the nightingales fill the summer night with song.

The sick man on his bed of pain leans on his restless pillow to listen. Anxious watchers turn pale faces toward the darkness to catch more clearly the thrilling notes.

And many a worker by the midnight lamp rises from his toil, and lets the summer air blow on his fevered brow; for the music is in it; and comes with it; and as he drinks in the air-thrilling sound, he thanks God for its beauty and its message of peace.

CRIPPLED BIRDS.—Birds deprived of the use of limbs do not always "go to the wall." A writer in a contemporary has seen a finch with a wounded wing sustaining life by robbing spiders'-webs strung across the brambles and low bushes of the flies entangled therein.

This enterprising songster did not show a lean body either, and at the end of three weeks was able to fly away to its old haunts.

A lame crow lived for the greater part of a summer by eating the bait from a cluster of rat-traps, the dexterity it employed in avoiding the spring and teeth revealing it to be cunning and observant.

Hunger compelled it to attack an imprisoned rodent on one occasion, the struggles of the latter eventually dragging the bird into the snare, the two being found by a stableman later in the afternoon. But for barefaced impudence a pied wagtail comes first.

This bird had suffered an injury to its pinions, and ran about a kitchen-garden for some time before it was discovered. Even then it evaded capture, and its nimble legs served it in good stead, not even the cat having a chance in the race.

The master of the house had a pet owl which was fed regularly on milk-sops, the bowl being carried into an outhouse where the blinking bird fed at leisure.

One day the wagtail was observed to run into the barn, and, with gaping mouth and wings fiercely flapping, attack the owl so persistently that it hobbled off, leaving the milk and bread to the mercy of the ravenous little assailant. This happened so frequently that the owl was in danger of pining, and its meals were served in a more secure quarter.

A wood-pigeon with broken wing robbed the barn-door fowls of their grain, and grew so bold that it actually scared away the hens by strutting and puffing out its breast, pecking at them when they ventured too near him, and cooing discordantly loud to further frighten them.

LANGUAGE, we are told, is the channel through which our thoughts flow to our fellow men and the world. But thoughts, however grand and noble, generous and great, far-reaching and inspiring, will not of themselves perform any required things of life. Mankind must not merely think and impart thought—knowledge—but their thoughts must be accompanied by a quickening zeal and a characteristic energy.

The World's Events.

Grief in Persia for a deceased husband is limited to a fortnight.

The skin of the wolf is said to make the best covering for banjo heads.

At the present rate of increase, the earth's population will double itself in 200 years.

Roman architects placed earthen jugs in theatre walls to increase the resonance.

The average residue of ashes left after the cremation of the human body amounts to 8 oz.

Russians say that you must eat forty pounds of salt with them before you can know them.

Cotton-reels are turned and bored by a very simple machine which completes from 5,000 to 6,000 per hour.

A dog belonging to the mate of a boat running out of Baltimore died of grief after the death of its master.

It is known that there were men practising the profession of dentistry in Egypt at least five thousand years ago.

Chinese male infants when they are a month old have their hands shaved. A banquet is usually a part of the ceremony.

A Chicago jury recently discovered on retiring to consider its verdict, that one of its number had no knowledge of English.

Australia could be made to support 400,000,000 inhabitants of the black or yellow races who would be able to endure the climate.

The Russian sceptre is of solid gold, three feet long, and contains among its ornaments 208 diamonds, 380 rubies and 15 emeralds.

The people of Paris have consumed within the past year 21,221 horses, 229 donkeys and 40 mules, the meat weighing, according to the returns, 4,915 tons.

Austria is an ideal country for murderers. In ten years more than eight hundred persons were found guilty of murder, of whom only twenty-three were put to death.

A certain amount of military instinct in children seems universal, for one toy firm dispatches every year several hundred thousand tin swords to all parts of the world.

Since the beginning of this century no fewer than fifty-two volcanic islands have risen out of the sea. Nineteen of that number have since disappeared, and ten are now inhabited.

A certain scientist has found that taking four heads of hair of equal weight, the numbers of hairs according to color was as follows: flaxen, 90,000; black, 105,000; brown, 109,000; fair, 140,000.

A London magistrate has decreed that a householder cannot interfere with an organ-grinder unless he is disturbed in his business, has sickness in his house or is affected in his health by the sounds of the organ.

Some physicians declare that by excessive cycling the nervous system may be exhausted without the knowledge of the rider; and that when attacked by disease the cyclist many find himself without reserve force to resist it.

A powerful anæsthetic, which volatilizes on exposure to the air, has been invented. It is believed that bombs filled with this chemical, and thrown into the ranks of an opposing army, would in a few minutes utterly paralyse the foe.

One hundred tons of cats' tails were recently sold in one lot for the purpose of ornamenting ladies' wearing apparel. This means that, assuming an average cat's tail to weigh two ounces, no fewer than 1,792,000 pussies had to be killed.

In a certain country district of Germany "pay weddings" were in vogue until recently, each guest paying for his entertainment as much as he would at an inn, the receipts being placed aside to set up the happy pair in their new home.

WE HAVE PLENTY OF MONEY

To spend on educations. Some parents have not. That is why we have already educated nearly 300 girls free of all cost to parents or girls. We stand ready to educate 300 more. Young men, too. Sex makes no difference. We educate them at any college you like. But there is no expense.

The Ladies' Home Journal
Philadelphia

CHANGES.

BY L. J.

The roses blooming yesterday
Are drooping ere they fade away;
The sky's sweet blue has turned to gray.

The little baby hands we kissed,
The smiles no sadness could resist,
Are only mem'ries in the mist.

To hold those little hands we strove,
And pleaded passionately above—
We could not see the Wiser Love.

Life's fairest hours oft end in pain,
Its blithe songs have a sad refrain;
Sweet summer dies 'mid falling rain.

Yet, darling mine, our glad hearts know,
Thro' changing years of weal and woe,
The old sweet love of long ago!

KNIGHTS OF THE ROAD.

The life of the dashing highwayman has been invested by all writers with a sort of sensational romance. So long as the throstle sings in "merry Sherwood" and the sun shines upon the spires of Nottingham, will the name of "Robin Hood" be a household word. But the "knights of the road" were not all Earls of Huntingdon, though many of them were of noble birth, and in some instances held high offices both in church and state.

It is a dark story, that which the Honorable Grantley Berkeley tells in his recollections of Twysden, Bishop of Raphoe, who played the highwayman in 1752, was shot through the body and died from the wound at a friend's house, his death being announced as arising from other causes.

The "palmy days" of the highwayman commenced from the civil wars of King Charles' time and extended right down to the end of the reign of George III., during which period they reaped a "golden harvest." Previous to this time we occasionally find scattered up and down the pages of history, mention of some knight or squire of the road more famous than his brethren. The robber who saved Margaret of Anjou and her unfortunate son was one of these. Sir Gosselin Denville, who flourished in the reign of the second Edward, was another. His ancestors are stated to have come into England with the Conqueror, and, if so, it might be urged in excuse that the worthy knight did but follow the ancestral example.

In the middle of the seventeenth century it was no uncommon thing for the gay young cavalier to take to the road as the readiest mode of mending his fortunes by lightening the purses of the well-to-do Round-head citizens whom he held in supreme contempt. Moll Cutpurse—so named from her profession—was a noted highwaywoman at that time. She had been early left an orphan, and thus at liberty to follow her own sweet will, she for a time gained a living by assuming male attire and posing as a fortune-teller.

"The Golden Farmer" was the nickname bestowed upon a notorious highwayman — a Welshman — whose patronymic was William Davis. He was the terror of travelers along the Bristol and Salisbury road in the reign of the "merry monarch" and down to the year 1690, when he was caught and hung. Indeed, the bones of most of these fine fellows ultimately adorned the gibbet, either at Tyburn or at some cross-roads.

It was also in the days of the abovementioned witty gentleman, who won from his admirers the name of the "merry monarch," that Claud Duval lived and flourished. Duval was the son of poor parents in Normandy and came into England at the Restoration in the train of the Duke of Richmond. Disdaining however the life of a "lackey," he joined the ranks of the gentlemen of the road. He was taken while drunk at the "Hole-in-the-Wall" Tavern, London, and was hung at Tyburn in January 1670, being then only in his twenty-seventh year.

Jack Sheppard came in with the House of Hanover, and though described as being the son of an honest carpenter," yet before he was twenty he kept half London in terror, and once at least affected his escape out of Newgate. When recaptured he was found disguised in a butcher's blue frock and apron. It is said that he requested his friends after his execution to place him in a warm bed, and have a certain vein opened, which he imagined might restore him to life. He was buried in the Churchyard of St. Martin's in the Fields.

Richard Turpin was another of this brood. Who has not read of him and of his famous "Black Bess?" The son of an East Anglian farmer, in his youthful days he was apprenticed to a butcher in Whitechapel, but from this respectable tradesman he soon became estranged in order to join a gang of smugglers, and subsequently a gang of deerstalkers in Epping Forest. In those days the forest, especially in the neighborhood of Copt Hall, was infested with highwaymen, and Turpin soon became one of the most renowned of the rising generation of their order. He was a "comely man," and like Duval a bit of a dandy, and a great favorite with the fair sex.

At the London end of what was formerly Finchley Common, nearly opposite to the "Green Man" Inn, on the Barnet Road, is an old oak, behind which, tradition says, the famous master of the more famous "Black Bess" used to take up his position. The tree, which is called "Turpin's Oak," is green and flourishing, and it is stated that pistol-balls have been frequently extracted from the bark.

Besides the heaths and commons, which formed a regular spider's web round the metropolis, the London parks also swarmed with "copper-captains" and squires of the night, in other words robbers of every description, who preyed upon benighted travelers and carriage folk.

These outrages appear to have increased in frequency towards the close of the American War. In the early years of the reign of George III. hardly a week, perhaps not a day passed, but somebody was plundered in the London parks; indeed, so unsafe was Hyde Park, that almost within the memory of our grandfathers a bell used to be rung at intervals in Kensington to muster the people returning to town. As soon as a party sufficiently numerous to ensure mutual protection had assembled, they started, and thus they journeyed till all had passed the dangerous precincts of the Park.

Grains of Gold.

The most manifest sign of wisdom is continued cheerfulness.

It is folly to attempt any wicked beginning in hope of a good ending.

Never do anything concerning the rectitude of which you have a doubt.

Our prayers for guidance will not be heard unless we are willing to be led.

In trifles, infinitely clearer than great deeds, actual character is displayed.

One act of beneficence to the needy, one act of real usefulness, is worth all the abstract sentiment in the world.

There is often room for much courage in speech, courage not so much to maintain opinions as to confess ignorance.

An affected humility is more insufferable than downright pride. Take care that your virtues be genuine and unsophisticated.

The pleasantest things in the world are pleasant thoughts; and the greatest art in life is to have as many of them as possible.

When doing what is right, the heart is easy, and better every day; but when practising deceit, the mind labors, and every day becomes worse.

Femininities.

Women are to be measured, not by their beauties, but by their virtues.

Some people think they are reasoning with you when they are only arguing.

In Russia you must marry before eighty or not at all, and can marry only five times.

Queen Marguerite of Italy claims to have the sandals that were worn by Nero, the tyrant.

Every woman has an idea that her beauty would be awfully dangerous if she wasn't so careful.

Nine hundred women have been elected this year to serve as poor law guardians in England.

("Yes, her looks favor her mother's people." "Indeed?" "Oh, greatly. She doesn't look a bit like them."

"When I broached matrimony she dismissed the subject with a word." "What did she say?" "Yes."

A Chinese proverb says: "A hundred men may make an encampment, but it takes a woman to make a home."

Some women can never understand why babies won't quit yelling and go to sleep when they begin to sing to them.

"How did Mrs. Lovely happen to be dropped from the Women's Rights Club?" "She spoke in praise of her husband."

Husband: "My friend hardly recognized you to-day." Wife: "That's strange, for I wore the same hat you bought for me three years ago."

Mrs. Seaside: "Was your house-party a success?" Mrs. Countryeot: "Yes, indeed! There wasn't one of them who wasn't engaged the first week, and there weren't two of them who would speak to each other the second."

"You see, it was this way. They were all three so dead in love with her and all so eligible that to settle the matter she agreed to marry the one who should guess nearest to her age." "And did she?" "I can't say. I only know she married the one who guessed the lowest."

"Now, for your own sake, look cheerful, so that they won't know I have rejected you," she says, as they enter the ball room again. "I wish I could, but I can't," he replies. "Well, I'll look as unhappy as I can, and they'll think that I've accepted you," she says generously.

There are five European kings who do not dance. The quintette of wallflowers consists of King Humbert of Italy, the Austrian Emperor, the rulers of Denmark and Saxony, and the King of the Belgians. On the other hand, as if to partly balance the failings of masculine sovereigns, there are certain royal ladies who smoke.

In the old days of the good old town of Bristol, England, when a man and his wife differed in politics or anything else to an intolerable extent, they would adjourn to a burial ground, join hands over a grave, and each say, "Death parts us." Then they would go their separate ways, satisfactorily divorced.

Another toilet article, the sale of which is ever growing, is tincture of benzoin. For counteracting the effect of wind and weather upon the complexion and removing all trace of greasiness, a few drops of benzoin put in a basinful of soft water form an invaluable remedy. The tincture has been aptly described as a "skin tonic."

It is said the number of dark-haired girls who get married greatly exceeds that of the fair ones, a statistician tells us; and in order to prove that this is owing to man's choice, not the redundancy of brunettes, he proceeds to show that an overwhelming majority of those women who "live and die unmarried" have fair hair and blue eyes.

Hu King Eng, the first Chinese woman doctor, is a great success in the Flowery Land. Having studied and taken the degree of M. D., after seven years' hard work, she is now in charge of the Siang-Hu hospital at Foo Choo. A story is told of a coolie who wheeled his blind and aged mother a thousand miles on a barrow to the woman doctor. A double operation for cataract was the result, and the old woman can now see as well as ever.

An eminent physician was attending a patient whose nervous system seemed breaking up, and who became very excited over the merest trifles. "Think," he said, "all you can of deep and silent things: the water, calm and placid, with no land in sight, stretches of sky, and, above all things, close your eyes and think of the forest. Think of the shade and stillness of a late afternoon under a thick growth of pines, and you will be surprised at the calming and strengthening effect."

Perfumed butter on the dinner table is one of the latest fads of the wealthy. The dairies where this butter is made are as odorous as a florist's shop. In the first place, the butter is made in small pats like those in ordinary use. Each pat is wrapped in a bit of fine muslin and placed on a bed of rose leaves specially prepared in an earthen jar. On top another layer of the fresh and delicate rose leaves is placed before the jar is filled with a solid lump of ice. Then the jar is placed in a refrigerator and allowed to remain there for ten hours, when the pats are ready for the customer.

Masculinities.

If a man cannot find ease within himself, it is to little purpose to seek it elsewhere.

If motives were always visible, men would often blush for the most brilliant actions.

The amethyst is so named because it was thought to be a preventive of drunkness.

A violent passion has seldom brought two persons together without ultimately making both of them miserable.

Some men tell their wives everything that happens, while others go still farther, and tell them a lot of things that never even happened.

Jabbers: "I woke up last night and found a burglar in my room." Havers: "Catch him?" Jabbers: "Certainly not. I'm not making a collection of burglars."

Practical Father: "So you want to marry my daughter, eh?" Poetical Lover: "Yes, sir. I would lie down and die for her!" Practical Father: "H'm! Would you get up and work for her?"

The men of Berlin have an odd habit of brushing and combing their hair and whiskers in public. In the restaurants and cafes men pull out their implements and "spruce up" while waiting for their orders to be filled. They do not take the trouble to leave the table, either.

"Why is he dragging the poor little boy along that way? Gracious goodness! He'll jerk the poor, weeping little fellow's arm out of its socket! What do you suppose is the matter?" "There's a circus parading up the next street, and the man is probably afraid that the little boy will miss it if they don't hurry."

The Prince of Wales is said to have learned in his youth to make stockings. The Duke of York learned the trade of ropemaking. The Czar can plough, sow, and reap. The German Emperor is a practical typesetter. King Humbert is an excellent shoemaker. King Oscar of Sweden handles the axe with no little dexterity.

In West Virginia is a man with an ambition so peculiar and unusual that some people think him crazy. For many years he has made it a point to be the first citizen in the county to pay his taxes. About three years ago, and for the first time in his life, he was beaten by a swifter taxpayer, and it almost broke his heart.

Merchant Tailor: "I am sorry to say it, Mr. Goodheart, but as this is to be your wedding suit, I must demand cash on delivery." Mr. Goodheart: "Eh? Why, I've had an account with you for years, and I've always paid promptly to the hour, the very hour, sir." "Yes, Mr. Goodheart, but you were a bachelor, and had the handling of your own money."

The last survivor of the old band of abolition agitators is Parker Pillsbury, who lives at Concord, N. H., and is still in comparatively good health, at the age of 88, his birth year having been the same as that of Lincoln, Gladstone, and Darwin, Mr. Pillsbury's wife, whom he married in early manhood, is also still living. It is fifty-eight years since he left the ministry.

A man in South Africa left his property to be equally divided between two sons. Not being able to agree, they decided to let President Kruger arbitrate. He said to the eldest, "You are the eldest, are you not?" "Yes," was the answer. "So you shall divide the property." This pleased the elder immensely. "You are the younger," continued Kruger to the other, "so you shall have first choice!"

The first medical degree granted in New England was an honorary one, bestowed on Daniel Turner of Connecticut by Yale College in 1720. As this was intended as a token of gratitude for Dr. Turner's liberal gifts to the college and not as a recognition of any particular fitness on his part to practice medicine a wit of the time interpreted M. D. to signify multum donavit—he has given much.

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The Ladies' Home Journal
Philadelphia

Latest Fashion Phases.

In Paris hat fashions more birds than plumes appear, although the fashion of using three short ostrich plumes of the same size and shape, and placed in a row, is prevalent. Some houses are making a lavish display of shaded plumes, and are fashioning toques of shaded velvet. Velvet flowers come in all the new and fashionable colors that have no resemblance to the color chosen by nature, pansies appearing in geranium pink and poppies in iris blue. A pretty form of the equestrian shape has the brim and low crown covered with velvet flowers.

So many new furs are in the shops that the reign of special ones must be over. Time was when a fur coat meant a sealskin, a sealskin meant a lot of money, and that meant that most of us didn't have a fur coat. But now there is no especial distinction about seal, and the imitation furs are so beautiful, they wear so well and are so much more reasonable in price, that the only regret about them is that they suffer under the ignominy of trying to pretend themselves seal. The new furs are not open to such imputation. You'll find them in the shops by all sorts of names. Translated, no doubt, many of them would spell bow-wow or meow, but they are pretty and new, and will readily find purchasers.

A bit of economy that a good many clever women are practicing is the rehabilitation of the silk waists that were so pretty throughout the summer for informal evening wear. It is not of much use in these days of radical changes to pack away one's season's wardrobe for use the next year. The better way is to keep things in continuous service so far as possible until one has had the worth of them.

In London the chiffon-covered blouse is seen everywhere. It is cut high for afternoon tea, and cut low for the theater, and there is every indication that it will be thoroughly desirable for semi dress occasions for a good many months to come. A design that lasts well is a round bodice with blouse front fastening on the left side under a ruffle or lace cascade. A quite shabby silk waist can be veiled with chiffon in some such fashion and will receive thus a new lease of life.

The new waterproof materials are here at last, but they cost a lot. They look just like ordinary material — that is, covert cloth that has been through the process is not thereby changed in appearance, and this proof covert cloth is the most popular. Of it traveling and wheel dresses are made, and so are jackets and cloaks. You can get proof silks, too, but unless a rain cloak be made of silk, silk has no place in a rainstorm. One might as well "proof" their night dresses.

All fashions in hairdressing that have any force favor women whose locks are abundant and fine, so a coiffure that is suited to most dressy occasions, and yet does not demand a lot of hair, should be of especial interest. Such an arrangement is that the artist puts on. It is typical of what the women of scant locks must do—the curling irons are her redress, and what little hair there is must be made to spread as loosely as possible. Cut into different available lengths all the hair except just enough to make one loop, which, fastened with a handsome comb and backed by an aigrette, a loop of ribbon or a bow, will take the place of a coil. The short lengths will then be curled, waved and puffed. In this way the head will be loosely dressed and the effect required will be secured.

It seems accepted that the outline of the head at the back must not be followed. In case of the much-to-be-desired stacks, the great coils or loose loops sufficiently disguise at that point, but where the hair is thin the outline must be hidden by fluffed out locks. Fluff does not mean what it used to—mere dryness and feathery lightness will not do now. The round of each ringlet, the curve of each puff must shine. This means that the hair must be absolutely clean, and that it must then be brushed or dressed to gloss.

Evening gowns need wraps to cover them, and of these luxurious garments I have lately seen two of unusual beauty. One was a pelisse of silver gray mirror velvet, to cover the entire figure. It had a cape of fox fur for the neck to snuggle into, and a band of fox fur ran down the front to the ground. There were hood-like sleeves of the velvet coming to the elbows and open on the under side of the arm; these were fur-edged.

There were also tight undersleeves covered with heavy white lace and spreading out like gauntlets over the hands. A quaint bolero of the same lace fastened on the left side with a twist of velvet and a silver clasp set with emeralds. The silver waist belt was set with emeralds also. The great roll collar had an ivory white brocade lining.

The other wrap was an opera cape of white brocade figured with pink and gold. It had wide cape sleeves, veiled with cream lace and edged with pale yellow ostrich feather trimming. A wide collar of cream lace covered the shoulders. At the back of the neck was a huge rosette of green velvet, with a lace center from which a lace cascade streamed. The ends of the velvet were carried down to the waist and clasped there with diamonds. There were pale yellow roses in the lace box. The cape was lined throughout with green.

The dainty mulls, tulles and gauzes over colored slips, so much in evidence all summer, are well worth a little freshening. There will be nothing prettier this winter for small dances for young girls.

One of the most effective new blouses I have seen is of a delicate shade of blue glace. It is laid in fine tucks at the yoke and has a Medici collar of mauve velvet overlaid with cream colored guipure and softened inside with white chiffon. A chiffon fichu is tied lightly in front, the ends reaching below the waist. There is a short bolero of mauve velvet and guipure. The sleeves are of shirred glace, with shoulder frills of chiffon run with the narrowest of mauve velvet ribbon.

For daylight wear all fur costumes are growing constantly in favor. An extremely smart one is of Persian lamb, with a band of ermine edging the plain gored skirt. The short coat is cut in points at the bottom and opens on a pointed ermine vest. The sleeves have wide ermine cuffs and there is a tabbed ermine collar. A small round hat of the same fur and a muff can be added.

Rather than weight down a fluffy tulle ball dress with a heavy cloak fashionable women are planning what they style a domino, which is made of taffeta. This is so light and stands away so well that it cannot injure the most delicate gown. To protect arms and chest the domino is made on a deep fur yoke. On this taffeta is set in great box pleats that will spread to any extent. Long heavy silk mitts to pull on over the bare arms reach well up under the sleeve and go over the glove. On her feet are high, fur-lined shoes. She is supposed to only step from door to carriage, and there is supposed to be carpet laid on the sidewalk. If it is not that kind of a ball, then she'd better have taken off her ball slippers and put on ordinary shoes.

Lots of girls don't put anything over their dancing slippers. They risk catching their deaths, but they look pretty, their fluffy skirts held high about their silken ankles, their little heels together, and that anxious, what-shall-do look that girls can put on when they ought to know perfectly well what to do.

Real lace is in so great demand that all resources are taxed to the utmost, and the result is that transferred work is again being seen. Thereby a mere quarter of a yard of a valued lace is made to spread over a much larger surface of fine net. The pattern of good lace, properly transferred on a fine net, makes a lace-work at once artistic and beautiful.

The net should, of course, be coffee-stained to match the shade of the lace itself. Darning work on fine net is reappearing, and yokes and sleeves of such work are accounted beautiful. A peep at some of the old-time "darned" sets of sleeves and yoke will convince you that such work may be made second in beauty only to lace.

Oxblood red is a color that is found in many fine stuffs, and a proof of the durability of its fashionableness comes in its appearance in fur-trimmed garments for winter. Thus used it has a very swagger look, and is in the more expensive lines of garments. Yet it can be so used that a small supply of fur will make a goodly show. It countines handsomely with Persian lamb and with black astrakhan.

Wide collar, cuffs, and a belt of the fur, the latter fitted in bodice fashion and finished with a centre girdle of metal, make a very good showing of the fur, which, though it may not add materially to the warmth of the garment, gives a cozy look that makes other folk warmer if not the wearer.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

To add to the household's usual capacity for storing away articles extra room is now being demanded, and beds, couches, trunks and bags for the housing of treasures are rapidly making their appearance. New couches are made so that the top, turning easily back, discloses an airtight storage place, where skirts may be spread at full length. For the waists, the brass bedstead offers a refuge, in two dust-proof drawers placed underneath.

One drawer opens at the upper end of the bed, and one at the foot, the length of both being the width of the bed. There is a space between the closed top of the drawer and the bed to allow for the free circulation of air between.

A pleated curtain to match the draperies of the bed is tacked to the front of the drawers, hiding them from view when closed. So much for the kind offices of the cabinetmaker. Nor is the trunkmaker far behind.

A new dress suit case for women is made in extra light weight to hold an entire gown without crushing; while a hat trunk with places for seven hats makes "milady" a happy woman. There is in this a velvet rest, to which hats are pinned, but which may be removed, if occasion requires.

The pretty little figures and articles made in plaster of paris are charming until they become stained, and then they are an eyesore. To clean them a clean piece of whiting should be dissolved in a little water, and when thoroughly incorporated with the fluid, the latter should be painted smoothly over the discolored plaster of paris article. The whiting will not rub off if a small quantity of ordinary isinglass is melted first in warm water and when cool is mixed with the whiting and water.

The last notion in a traveling bag is one of dashing Scotch plaid. Any plaid that is brilliant and is made up of a lot of colors is called Scotch. These bags are made up exactly like the usual leather ones, and are mounted with leather. They make a pretty touch of color with a demure traveling rig, and they guarantee recent purchase; indeed, the probabilities are that you got yours on the other side, or else it was brought over to you. Naturally such a bag will not last as long as will one of serviceable leather, but that is what comes of being extravagant—you are not always obliged to be so dreadfully utilitarian.

Blankets can not be too frequently or thoroughly exposed to the fresh air. Even those made of the finest wool, if constantly used without careful airing, will cease to afford that delicious warmth and to be the luxurious covering that they are when new. When washed they should be dried as soon as possible, and the nap raised by going over them with a fine and short-toothed wool card.

One woman with a mere handful of very fine hair washes it once a week with kerosene. About a half-pint in the basin is enough. She rubs the scalp thoroughly and saturates head and hair. Every bit of dust comes out in a hurry. Then she dries it for an hour in wool cloths, and next takes another hour in sun and wind. The result is glistening fluff.

When all curled and lightly caught, a high loop at the top of the head, a glistening comb in front and an aigrette at the back, she is, in her evening gown, a picture to make envious the woman with stacks of hair. Yet the kerosene treatment, and there are various forms of it, is hardly to be recommended. For one thing, the danger from fire is dreadful while the oil is in the hair, and most women regard using such oil in their tresses as too great a sacrifice anyhow.

With the best intentions in the world, most young mothers are quite as ignorant as baby No. 1 itself regarding the care required to keep its small person in order. To such, a word from an experienced nurse may settle doubts and make assurance doubly sure. As soon as the teeth come, clean daily with a soft rag or soft tooth brush, and inspect carefully once a week for evidence of decay or spots. If the latter appear, rub with a little pumice stone. Cut a match like a chisel, dip in pumice and rub the teeth. In cutting the tiny nails, do not round them too much at the corner, especially the toe nails, as it is apt to give rise to ingrowing nails.

In regard to the hair, a brush and coarse comb are all that should be used, as the fine comb is a relic of barbarism. If the skin on the head is inclined to become "scurfy," rub with vaseline to soften, then wash off with warm water and castile soap, taking care not to press heavily on the fontanelles or soft spot. If the hair tends to fall out, use bay rum and quinine in proportion of twenty grains of the latter to a half pint of bay rum.

An experienced candy maker says due regard must be had to the state of the air for candy making. On a damp, moist or rainy day, when the air is full of moisture, syrup will not evaporate or candy harden well. For the same reason it is not wise to have anything on the stove that will throw off steam when sugar is cooking for fondant.

Fireplace fittings grow amain, embracing furnishings appropriate for every style of fireplace, from the massive Queen Anne log fireplace to the daintier fin de siecle grates and mantels. Among the season's novelties are wood baskets of sealing wax, red enameled wicker and forest green.

The glint of brass brightens all the windows of the housefurnishing stores these days, for brass is emphatically this season's favorite metal. Tables, brackets, frames, cabinets, desk furnishings, screens, even portieres and hangings, glitter with an almost barbaric prodigality of this metal, and those whilom favorites — Dresden china, marquetry, sterling silver and old tapestries—may as well veil their faces till the reign of brass is accomplished.

Muffins and Gems.—Sift three cups of flour into a bowl, with two heaping teaspoonfuls of baking powder, a teaspoonful of sugar and a pinch of salt. Rub smoothly into it a tablespoonful of half butter and half lard. Beat three eggs, keeping the whites separate from the yolks. Pour a pint of milk and the yolks into the flour, and mix to a smooth batter. Stir in the whites beaten to a stiff broth; pour the butter in muffin rings and bake quietly. For cornmeal gems, use two cups of rich, yellow meal to one of flour, two tablespoonfuls of lard and butter mixed, and follow the same directions used for making the muffins.

Fruit Cake.—Quarter of a pound of butter, half a pound of fine sugar, three-quarters of a pound of flour, half a pound of sultana raisins, quarter of a pound of orange peel, one teaspoonful of essence of lemon, one large teaspoonful of baking powder, three eggs, one teacupful of milk; beat the butter and sugar in a basin before the fire, till they get mixed and light; then beat up the eggs well and pour the milk among them; put this, a little at a time, among the butter and sugar and mix well; then put in the flour and baking powder, and give all a good beat up; add the fruit, cleaned and the peel cut up and the essence; mix well; pour into a greased and papered cake tin, and bake till ready.

Oven Scones.—One pound of flour, one small tablespoonful of butter or dripping, one dessert spoonful of soft sugar, one teaspoonful baking soda, two teaspoonfuls of cream of tartar, and some sweet milk. Rub the dripping among the flour, add all the dry things, make into dough with milk, divide in three pieces, roll each piece round, cut it in four, and brush over with milk or egg, and put on a greased oven shelf, and into a hot oven for about ten minutes.

Almond Fingers.—Half a pound of flour, a quarter of a pound of almonds, a quarter of a pound of butter, a quarter of a pound of fine sugar, one ounce of sugar, half a teaspoonful of baking powder. Rub butter and flour together, and add baking powder; make into a paste with the yolk of egg and water, roll out and cut in fingers, then blanch and chop the almonds very finely, and mix them with the sifted sugar and the white of the egg; spread it on the fingers, and bake quickly in a good oven a slight brown.

THE governess of the young King of Spain read him a lesson recently on the necessity of "behaving prettily." The next day she declined to accede to one of his irregular wishes, when he immediately threatened her with, "If you don't give me what I want, I'll make faces at the people the next time I go out riding!"

EVER THE SAME.

BY N. J.

A beautiful butterfly came one day
(It was Cupid in disguise),
And he flew away from a maiden's grasp,
As she reached for the lovely prize.
And a wise old owl, who sat quite near,
Spoke warning words in the maiden's ear.

But she followed it over the grassy slopes,
Where the flowers were fair and sweet;
And away where the road was rough and lone
And the briers hurt her feet;
While, spite of sunshine and spite of rain,
The owl still chanted the old refrain.

But then Cupid lit on a fair, white rose;
And the maiden caught him fast.
And she scorned the thorns which tore her hand;
For love was hers at last.
While the old owl sat with solemn look;
And sighed, and read from wisdom's book.

A Little Ruse.

BY H. B. N.

FINCH was the barebacked rider who generally impersonated Mazeppa, and such-like characters, at Whitcombe's great circus; Bulger was the funny man, who did the comic business. Finch was young, tall, and rather good-looking; Bulger was shorter and considerably older, with a humorous, fat, red face that made you smile for no explicable reason when you looked at it. Bulger, in fact, was the very antithesis of Finch, who was rather a refined and serious young man; but, nevertheless, they were firm friends.

It may be inferred from the foregoing general description that if either of the two fell in love it would probably be Finch—and that was so; he was in love with Daisy Whitcombe, the circus proprietor's daughter, aged eighteen.

When Finch first confessed the extreme gravity of his symptoms to Bulger as his best friend, and asked his opinion what to do in the circumstances, Bulger grinned, and then he gave his advice.

"If you are bent on making a fool of yourself, Finch," he said, "my tip is, do it as quickly as possible, for it's no good mooning over those things; go straight to old Whitcombe, tell him the state of your mind, and hear what he says. By-the-bye, I suppose you've got some idea of Daisy's feelings?"

"Well, to tell you the honest truth, Bulger," said Finch, "I don't know whether she likes my face or Noblett's money the better."

"No?" said Bulger genially. "Well, I wouldn't be two seconds making my mind up."

"You see," rejoined Finch, smiling sheepishly, "she's very young to appreciate the value of——"

"Money," assented Bulger.

"No, confound you!" replied Finch. "Of devoted affection. The top and bottom of it is, though," he proceeded, "I believe I've a good chance if old Whitcombe doesn't kick up rough."

"Then go in and win," said Bulger warmly.

Thereupon Finch, who before everything else was a young man of decision, approached old Whitcombe and avowed the state of his mind.

"Well, Tom Finch," said old Whitcombe, after frowning at him for the space of about half a minute with a not unkindly look, "I will say this for ye, I like your cool cheek in coming to me and asking me if you can take up with my daughter. I suppose you've got nothing?"

"About five hundred dollars," said Finch.

"Well, that's nothing," said old Whitcombe, "except as showing that you can save. Anyhow, I won't say no to a decent lad. I'll say to you what I said to that young dandy, Noblett, who came to me last week—my girl shall have what man she likes, but I'll hear nothing of a definite engagement for the next twelve months."

"That will do for me," said Finch heartily; "I'll take my chance at that."

"That's all right, then," said old Whitcombe; "leave it at that. But I'll say this for you, Tom, she seems mighty taken with young Noblett; why, I don't know; but there's no accounting for girls' tastes. He didn't seem satisfied, either, that he couldn't settle it instanter; talked of his money and family, and such-like, as if I ought to jump at him; but I shut him up pretty smart. I said, 'If she's minded to have you in twelve months, well and good; but no sooner, if you was a dook and a millionaire rolled into one.' And I say that to you, Tom Finch."

* * * * * *

Well satisfied with this negative expression of opinion in place of the refusal he had almost expected, Tom Finch returned to Bulger, who was assisting at an informal morning rehearsal, with the talented Daisy herself in the ring.

As he approached he saw also to his disgust that Noblett was lounging on the further side of the ring, talking to Sparkes, the ring master, and ogling Daisy as she came galloping round on horseback, standing erect, a graceful and bewitching figure, clad in the lightest of gauzy attire, her arms keeping the body in its correct poise, and a fascinating smile adorning a delightfully pretty but roguish face.

"Houp la! Over!" cried Bulger, as he extended a tattered paper hoop, through which she skimmed gracefully alighting once more, like any fairy, on the horse's back as it galloped along. The next moment she had pulled up opposite the detestable Noblett himself, and Finch's gorge rose as he saw him bend his knee for her foot and swing her lightly to the ground.

"Confound the snob!" said Finch to himself.

As he spoke, Bulger approached him hastily, and with a somewhat perturbed look.

"Come here, Finch," he whispered; "outside. By-the-bye, though, do you see anything of Lottie Parker?"

"She's over there," remarked Finch, "talking to Mrs. Macdermott and the sisters Zoro."

Bulger looked.

"That'll do," he remarked, as he drew the mystified Finch to a secluded position. "Look here!" Drawing a crumpled letter from his pocket, he handed it to Finch. "Read that."

"Eh?" asked Finch, as he glanced at the superscription and caught the words "Dear Lottie." "What's this, Bulger? Where did you get this?"

"Found it in the ring amongst the sawdust," replied Bulger. "Go ahead!"

"But this letter evidently belongs to Lottie Parker," said Finch dubiously, as he looked at Bulger.

"Most likely," said Bulger coolly. "Go ahead!"

"Then what right have I to read it?" asked Finch scrupulously. "This has nothing to do with me."

"Hasn't it?" said Bulger. "Here, hold on a minute," and he pointed to a line. "'Finch and Bulger,' there you are; that's something to do with us, hasn't it? When I see that name—Bulger—in a letter, I make no more bones of reading that letter than if it were a butcher's bill. So sail away! What! Here, let me read it then."

Seizing the letter from Finch's hands, he read as follows:

"DEAR LOTTIE—As I may not have an opportunity of seeing you alone when I call around, I write you finally as to arrangements. All is complete. The carriage will be at the end of Cordley Road at 11 5 sharp, and we catch the last train to Farnholme. I have got rooms for you and Daisy at the Bigham Hotel, and shall stop at the Trafford myself; the ceremony is to take place at twelve. I trust that no hitch may occur; above all, keep your eye on Finch and Bulger. If Daisy should show any signs of relenting, I trust to your persuasive eloquence to bring her to. Be sure I shall not forget you. Thankfully yours,

"ALGY NOBLETT."

"What does that mean?" gasped Finch, with an astounded look.

"It seems to me there's going to be an elopement," said Bulger. "But I must say this for Noblett, he seems to be doing the square thing."

Finch sat down with a sickly look.

"I'll never believe it, Bulger," he declared. "She swore positively to me a fortnight ago that she didn't really care for Noblett, and that she—she——"

"Oh, I daresay," said Bulger, cheerfully; "that would be her game, no doubt. Most likely she'd tell Noblett exactly the same thing; they're all alike, women."

Once more Finch leaned back and looked helplessly at his friend, at this dreadful display of cynicism.

"Then what's to be done, Bulger?" he inquired.

For a minute Bulger pondered deeply.

"I think you'd better leave this affair to me, Finch," he remarked presently. "If you mix yourself up in it, you'll most likely make Daisy your mortal enemy for life. This is more a case for an angry parent or a disinterested middle aged friend."

"But you'll stop it?" asked Finch.

"So far as I am justified in going," said Bulger, "I'll go, but no further. There may be an elopement, or there may not; I can't say."

"If you don't stop it, I shall," said Finch desperately.

"Now, just you leave it to me," repeated Bulger. "I tell you if you mix yourself up with this business you'll make a muddle of it."

* * * * * *

Acting on Bulger's advice, Finch took no further action, and for the rest of the day passed his time anxiously. It was evident too, as the evening approached, that both Daisy and Lottie Parker were in a state of sustained nervous excitement.

Half-past ten, however, saw the conclusion of the last item on the programme, and Finch, after busying himself with the horses somewhat longer than usual, passed out by the stable door into the road behind the circus.

The district clocks clanged forth eleven as he did so, and the next moment he saw two hurrying female figures emerge hastily from the rear door of the circus and hasten away. For a moment he stared in absolute consternation; they were Lottie Parker and Daisy. He could see the latter's light gray cloak and the nodding poppies in her black straw sailor hat, though her face was veiled.

Dashing after them, he kept them well in sight, notwithstanding the darkness.

There was no need to interfere, Finch informed himself, except in the last extremity. Probably Bulger, or old Whitcombe, would be waiting at Cordley Road; but, anyhow, he would be there.

Five minutes later, punctual evidently to a minute to the pre-arranged appointment, they reached the rendezvous, and Finch saw a carriage waiting. At the same instant Noblett sprang forward and opened the door to help the two ladies in. Not another soul beyond the driver was about—not a sign of Bulger. Finch's blood surged to the very tips of his fingers. This was no time to hesitate. Rushing forward, he seized the handle of the door.

"Hold on there!" he cried desperately. "This thing is not going on, Noblett!"

Turning on him, Noblett surveyed him savagely.

"Stand off, you fool!" he cried. "What right have you to interfere? These ladies come here of their own free will. Why do you intrude?"

"Then I must have their word for it!" cried Finch. "Speak up, Daisy. Think carefully of what you are doing. Say but that you wish to go with this scoundrel of your free, unbiassed desire, and I stand aside. Speak, darling."

A hysterical laugh came from Daisy's companion as Finch addressed her in these moving terms, and, looking towards her, he suddenly saw that it was not Lottie Parker, as he had imagined, but one of the sisters Zoro.

At the same moment, however, Noblett had approached Daisy.

"Speak, dearest," he demanded. "Let him hear your decision. Will you come?"

As he spoke, Daisy threw her light wrap aside and lifted her veil with a husky cough. The next instant Finch had started back with a spasmodic shout. As he looked, he saw the fat and smiling face of Bulger raised to the tender gaze of the infatuated Noblett.

"Dearest," said Bulger, "it shall be as you wish."

A shriek of laughter broke from Polly Zoro and Finch; and Noblett, with what sounded very like a curse, sprang into the carriage and drove away.

Little more remains to add. Bulger had arranged the whole affair beautifully. After neatly locking Lottie Parker in her own room, he had easily overcome the scruples of the foolish Daisy, whom, truth to tell, he found only too anxious to withdraw from the silly adventure; then, with the assistance of the delighted sisters Zoro, he performed the rest as we have seen.

Finch, acting on his advice, maintained a discreet silence concerning the whole event, and it was only twelve months later, when he became definitely engaged to Daisy, that it was broached. Then she assured him positively that she "never really meant to go off with Noblett."

Scientific and Useful.

TEST FOR METALS.—A good test for gold or silver is a piece of lunar caustic fixed into a wood point like a pencil. Slightly wet the metal to be tested, and rub it gently with the caustic. If gold or silver, the mark will be faint; but if an inferior metal, it will be quite black. Jewelers who purchase old gold and silver use this test.

ELECTRIC BARBERING.—They are now cutting hair by electricity. The apparatus to perform this feat consists of a platinum wire stretched over a comb. By pressing a button, the current is applied to the wire bringing it to a white heat. The comb is then passed through the hair, and as the wire comes in contact the hair is burned off. The end of each hair being cauterized when cut, prevents loss of the oily substance of the hair. The apparatus is attached to an ordinary lamp socket by a flexible cord and can be used by any barber of ordinary skill.

IMPROVED CYCLE TIRE.—A cycle tire, stuck full of knives and tacks, has been on exhibition in a Broadway shop window, New York, for some time. This tire contains a layer of cork between the tubes. A cross section of the tire shows the cork to be crescent-shaped and one-third of an inch thick in the widest part. It is enclosed between two tubes of rubber, each of which is a seamless tube. The cork lining lies within the running surface of the tires; and, if the outer tube is cut or torn, the inner air tube, being protected by the cork, remains good. It is said the practically puncture-proof quality does not seem to interfere with the resiliency of the tire.

Farm and Garden.

MENDING.—To mend holes in the milk pans, make the hole larger by inserting a fork tine, which will make the edges rough so it will hold a shot in place, then pound flat with hammer, resting the pan on a flat iron.

FENCES.—Good fences are cheapest in the end. What is a good fence and how may fencing material be made to cost less? Timber is too valuable; so is land. We must run straight lines with wire or wood. If live posts can be employed the great bugbear in cost will be overcome by degrees. Nobody who has used growing trees for stretching wire upon wants to go back to posts that are dead and decaying. A few young trees set in the fence line each year where older ones show a tendency to die or need cutting, will keep the fence up cheaply. Nail a board to each tree to tack the wire to so it won't grow into the bark. If the trees are solid they need not be nearer together than forty feet, light stakes being driven midway are sag preventives.

MY father had A SEVERE CASE OF PLEURISY, and was completely prostrated. His physician treated him with all the skill at his command, but the patient only appeared to grow worse. We finally resorted to the use of Jayne's Expectorant with the most happy results, for a few bottles of this medicine restored him to his usual health. THEO. RICHARDS, Stewart, Minnesota, Oct. 15, 1895.

IF YOU HAVE A DAUGHTER

And cannot afford to educate her, why not let THE LADIES' HOME JOURNAL do it for you? It has done so for nearly 300 girls already. Their education cost them not a penny. Nor will that of your daughter. No competition: no chance element. A distinct free offer.

The Ladies' Home Journal
Philadelphia

Humorous.

AS YEARS ROLLED BY.

He swore that for true love he'd marry;
In a cottage he'd much rather tarry,
With his love by his side,
Than take for his bride
A girl who had millions to carry.
He was twenty.

Years passed; he was thirty and single
In society's gay whirl he'd mingle;
He had loved half a score,
He was loving once more—
A lass? No. Her coin's golden jingle.
He was thirty.

A bachelor still, the old sinner!
Met a maiden and tried hard to win her,
Not because she was fair
Or had money to spare,
But—because she could order a dinner.
He was forty.

Free of charge—An empty gun.

It's queer, but henpecked husbands seldom crow.

The last glass before going to bed—The looking-glass.

Handled without gloves—Knives and forks, generally.

The "coughing hoss" is the Indian name for a locomotive.

Caller: "Are you sure Miss Riche is not in?"
Maid: "Do you doubt her word, sir?"

She: "I hear you have just got married; is it too late to offer congratulations?"
He: "O, yes; I was married three weeks ago."

"Spare me!" she moaned.
But he was unrelenting.
"No," he answered, "I'll not spare you a cent."

"Your husband seems to be a victim of the tobacco habit."
"No—I'm the victim. He thoroughly enjoys it."

Old Gentleman, to tramp: Why are you opposed to work?
Tramp: I ain't. If people didn't work how could I get along in these hard times?

"Georgie, I'm glad to see that you are polite, and offer sister the oranges first."
"Yes'm; 'cause then she has to be polite, an' take th' little one."

"Do you believe it is true that George Washington never told a lie?"
"I don't know. But if he didn't, Martha must have been an ideal wife."

Wife: "What a sweet smile there is on baby's face, John!"
Husband: "Yes, he's probably dreaming that he's keeping me awake."

The Miss: "Don't you think they are two souls with but a single thought?"
The cynic: "Well, I shouldn't wonder. They are both making fools of themselves."

Old Millyuns: "Young man, my daughter tells me that you kissed her last night."
Percival Tootles: "Well, if she wants to go around bragging about it, that's her privilege."

Mr. Howland: "I tell you, Maria, you're worrying over nothing. I can stop smoking any time I want to."
Mrs. Howland: "Well, then, stop now."
Mr. Howland: "I don't want to now."

Barnes Former: "Every seat was taken at our last performance."
Roscius de Hamme: "I heard about it. I was told that the audience carried off the benches as the only way of getting any return for their money."

"Railway accident this morning," said Blinkins, a suburban resident, after he had returned from his business in town and met his wife at the station.
"Is it possible?"
"Yes, the train was up to time both ways."

"How still they are," remarked Mrs. Fogg, a propos of the young couple in the next room.
"Yes," replied Mr. F.; "it reminds me of my army days. It was always wonderfully quiet just previous to an engagement."

Jones: "My doctor advises me to ride a wheel an hour a day."
Wheeler, contemptuously: "Only an hour a day! He must be a homœopath."

People who can be seen through—Those who make spectacles of themselves.

C.: "I suppose Brown and his wife attracted the attention that newly-married couples usually do?"
B.: "Oh, no! Brown married a widow, you know, and to avoid being suspected of being on a honeymoon trip, she took one of her children with them."

"Did you tell that young man not to call here any more?" asked Mabel's father severely.
"N—no."
"Why not?"
"I didn't think it was necessary. I don't see how he could call any more, now. He calls seven times a week."

"Your wife has such a liquid voice!" said Mr. F. admiringly to Mr. T.
"Yes; that's a pretty good name for it," replied Mr. T.
Mr. F. looked up inquiringly, and Mr. T. added immediately:
"Don't you understand? Why, it never dries up, you know!"

ONE FATAL WEAKNESS.

Few problems of human nature are more perplexing than those presented by the cases of people who are the victims of one deep-seated failing.

Men and women there are who, sane enough in other respects, appear in one solitary direction to have no moral responsibility whatever. Punishment does not deter them; a knowledge of the fact that they are ruining their lives imposes but a temporary check. The one weakness is indulged till it drags its victim under.

To the police people of this sort are well known. At every court a specimen can be produced. There is, for instance, an old man who has a positive mania for stealing coal.

Anything else is safe from his depredations; but, winter and summer alike, coal he must steal. He is at present serving a sentence of five years for this offence; and altogether he had had forty years in prison for that, and that alone.

A woman, also getting on in years, cannot withstand the temptation of stealing from linen-drapers who make an "outside show." Not being in very poor circumstances, the articles taken—many of them useless to her—are often given away to the first acquaintance she encounters.

Even stranger still was the mania of a gentleman of good education and high intelligence, a scholar and enthusiastic book collector. Well able to purchase all that he required, this unfortunate man was never so pleased as when he could steal a volume.

In his own town his strange propensity was well known, and when he had, with needless strategy, purloined a particular work for which he had a fancy, a bill would be made out, sent in to his sister, an elderly maiden lady, and the account duly paid.

When, however, the eccentric bibliomaniac operated elsewhere complications ensued. At length, despite the entreaties of his relatives, the gentleman was formally committed for theft. He ultimately got off; but the shock killed his sister, and the well-to-do book stealer soon followed her to the grave.

Such a very ordinary failing as a love of "showing off" has sealed the fate of scores of people otherwise perfectly rational. In proportion to the danger of the thing they attempt to do, they imagine will be the admiration for them of friends, acquaintances, and onlookers generally.

Giving a bachelor's party on the eve of his approaching wedding, a young master baker treated his friends to a visit to a circus. A lion-taming exhibition having been given, the baker declared that he himself could do quite as well.

The tamer was bribed. The baker entered the den. Before the hot irons and steel spikes, held in readiness, could be pressed into use the foolhardy young fellow had received a gash in the side from which he died next day.

To attract attention, a man, visiting a breezy seaside resort, stood balanced at the very edge of a cliff, looking out to sea. A strong wind was blowing from the ocean. Suddenly it lulled; the man heaved forward, and a moment later lay dead at the base of the cliff, killed by the fall.

A strange fate, some years ago, was the lot of a young colored man who was a most proficient swimmer. Nothing delighted him more, when he was walking fully clothed beside the water, than for a friend to, without warning, push him in.

The gentleman's little weakness even got to be generally known and total strangers would sometimes take advantage of it, thereby, it poor, earning a reward.

Espying the gentleman one day sauntering along the quay, a man who knew his peculiarity, creeping up silently behind, hurled the swimmer into the water. He never rose again. Two days before he had broken his collar bone, and his one arm was now strapped to his side.

An innate fondness for practical joking not long since cost a young man his life. He had been warned before; but the fun was so enjoyable that he failed to desist from it.

"Supposing I were to hang myself and you to discover my dead body? How would you feel?" was the question he put to a rather timid fellow-student. The proposal appeared so appalling that the evident fright of the person to whom it was made only urged the joker to try the experiment.

With the aid of another young man privileged to enjoy the "joke," the timid youth was to be taken to a certain place at a certain time, and there the practical joker was to be apparently hanging dead from a stout line.

The plot was carried out. The door opened. The timid one gave a scream, and darted forward to cut the supposed suicide down. But it was too late! The stool on which he stood had slipped, and the practical joker had in reality been hanged.

Taken altogether, it would appear that the boast that you have only one failing is not always a safe one. Better is it to be able to proclaim that not one of your numerous weaknesses shall have opportunity of mastering you.

GARDENS OF THE SEA.

There is a wonderful country under the sea, a country of hills and plains, of lofty mountains and deep valleys, of rocks and caves. Its wide-spreading meadows are covered with strange animal flowers that move themselves about in search of living prey, and its forests consist of branching corals, and sea weeds taller than the loftiest trees.

Tempests may rage fiercely overhead, but a deep, unbroken silence reigns always in this underworld, nor can the wildest hurricane, that drives vessels to wreckage, move the most delicate tendril of the sea-plants in the depths below. Fragile creatures that fall to pieces almost at a touch, spend their lives here in quiet and security.

The ocean depths, which for mankind are regions of breathlessness and death, are for billions of animals the region of life and health: the earth does not maintain nearly so many little creatures as those that swarm in countless myriads beneath the waves of the ocean.

Here are great purple sea-fans and lovely sea-lilies and sea-ferns and sea-cucumbers and sea-mice, and sponges displaying bright colors that are lost the moment they are taken from the water; and here the rare and beautiful corals are silently builded into reefs and islands.

At what is called the Keys at the southern end of the State of Florida, a coral plantation, lives and is growing. There is a famous lighthouse called Cary's Fortlight off the coast there, from which such a sight can be had. Cary's Fortlight is built in the open sea, without a foot of land about it.

It is an iron framework of columns, strengthened by a network of braces and girders, and the rooms in which lives the keeper are about half way up to the light, out of the reach of the waves, forty or fifty feet above the water.

A balcony runs about these rooms, and as the lighthouse is built over one of the most beautiful and extensive fields of coral known on this or any other coast, the sight presented on looking from this balcony into the ocean is more wonderful that can be well imagined by one who has not seen it.

The coral field spreads out around the lighthouse as far as the eye can reach, and so transparent is the water that the ocean bottom can be seen as plainly as a garden lying beneath.

The coral field is largely made up of what are called leaf corals, with large flat branches that grow one above another, chasing each other singly and in companies, darting about, winding in and out the corals as if in a game of hide-and-go-seek, and hundreds of fish play among their spreading baanches.

Most of them are of very brilliant colors, some of a bright blue, others partly blue and partly black, others again black blended with yellow, and still others of a bright canary-yellow beneath and rich purple above.

Now and then some large fish, a shark perhaps, passes by, and all the small fry scatter, hiding among the corals, and are seen no more till their enemy is out of sight.

Besides the leaf-coral, there are many others even more beautiful to be seen. Some are in the shape of huge vases, some are like great globes, others branch out as do the horns of the stag, and there are more delicate-branching kinds, called ginger-corals, and great numbers of sea-fans.

The sea-fans form the shrubbery of the sea-garden; they stand on the ocean bottom on a sort of root, and, unlike the leaf and branching corals, which are rigid and motionless, they rise lightly in the water, and wave in the gentle undercurrents as if stirred by the wind.

They are of many colors, and, mingled as they are with a kind of vegetable coral called coraline, and with the brightred, purple, or orange colored sponges of the Florida coast, you may easily realize, on looking at them, how surpassingly beautiful are the flower gardens of the sea.

The dexterity of a skilled performer is due solely to practice. Contortionists are generally taught at an early age, beginning with some simple motions like bending backward until the head touches the floor, and rising again without the aid of the hands. Afterwards more difficult feats are learned, until the muscles and joints become so supple that the whole frame can be twisted to any angle with apparent ease.

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